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CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

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INTRODUCTION

THE air is full to-day of frightened or complacent statements that religion is no longer a matter of interest to the plain man, and that its place has been taken by science. And for many people it is a commonplace that the Church has failed; it could not stop the war; it cannot prevent strikes; what use is it? And all this is often understood as if it pointed to the weakness and even the downfall of Christianity. But Christianity is not identical with religion. Indeed, between Christianity and many forms of religion there has been and must always be a definite hostility. Even the Church may depart, and has often departed, from the spirit of her Master. Nothing is more important to-day than to have some clear idea as to what Christianity really is.

Christianity has often been confused with Christian theology. Christianity will never be able to do without theology—that is, without careful and accurate thought on what is implied by the essential teachings of Christianity. But the Christian life was being lived long before the body of what we understand as Christian theology had come into existence. And Christianity was not spread by Christian theology; it was spread by the devoted and passionate confidence, or faith, of Christians in Jesus their Saviour, to whom they found they could look, not in vain, for everything they needed, and by the fidelity in which they carried out their obedience to what they knew as His commands in their life before men.

Now this fidelity was comparatively simple when Christians were a small minority in the world, and were liable to persecution. And in those early days, for the majority of Christians, the problems of Christian conduct were also comparatively simple. To be honest and kind and self-effacing and peaceable might need an iron resolution, and might entail the severest suffering and loss; but at least, in the circumstances in which

most Christians were living, people could easily know whether they were carrying out those brief yet far-reaching commands, or not.

But we are living in a very different world to-day. Who shall say who the Christians are? When our Western society calls itself Christendom, and when most of us assume a man to be a Christian unless, by word or action, he definitely proclaims that he is not, what a harassing variety of 'Christian' conduct we have to contemplate. Moreover, our 'Christian' society is to-day so complicated, so perplexingly split up into groups and swayed by competing interests of all kinds, that the wisest of us may sometimes be at our wit's end to know what is the right or kind or peaceable thing to do.

Now, life means functioning. An organism (and also an institution) continues to live as long as it functions—as it acts and reacts, more or less healthily, upon its environment. If then we are to understand Christianity, and still more if we are to assist or share in its life, we must see it in action. It is rightly known by its fruits, its energies, its activities. Towards this knowledge the following pages make a modest attempt to point the way.

We shall not be concerned with what are usually known as the activities of a church, important as these are for all of us; we shall not discuss, save incidentally, the services, the devotional meetings, the funds of the church. 'Thine is the loom, the forge, the mart.' We shall try to follow the Christian man and woman into those places with which many persons still think that Christianity has very little to do, but with which it has really everything to do. For if the disciples of Christ cannot be recognized when sitting at home round the fire, or doing the marketing and the house-work, or running a business, composing disputes, playing games, and making a living, they will, by most people, never be recognized at all. The Christianity that will gain and hold adherents is Christianity in action. Hence these brief studies.

W. F. LOFTHOUSE.

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

I.

THE NEW WAY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

IN the infancy of the Church the new religion was often spoken of as a 'way.' Paul's purpose in going to Damascus was, if he found any 'of the way,' to arrest them. At Ephesus Paul's opponents 'spoke evil of the way' before the multitude. Later on in the city there was a great uproar about 'the way.' In Jerusalem Paul confessed with shame that he had been a persecutor of 'the way'; while Felix at Caesarea, after hearing Paul's preliminary defence, grew quite curious about 'the way'; though, when he heard that it implied probity, self-control, and a sentence to be passed on his life, he trembled. The word had become practically a technical term.

With us the word has two more or less distinct meanings—it may mean a road, or a manner or fashion; there is a right and a wrong way, we say, of doing things. But in the passages we have just quoted the word means simply *road*. Christianity is a road or path. There might, of course, be other paths; and a common subject among the early preachers was the 'two roads.' 'There are two ways (or roads) of teaching and of power,' we read in what is known as the *Epistle of Barnabas*, written probably very shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. 'The one is of light and the other of darkness; and there is a great difference between the two ways.' The first way means love to God, humility, kindness, chastity, and the avoidance of greed, insincerity, covetousness, and the like. The second is the way of idolatry, adultery, murder, pride, witchcraft, magic, and so on. The same sermon, almost in the same words, is found in another

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very early writing known as the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*.

The New 'Way' meant Morality.

To read this gives the impression that Christianity was placed before the world as a system of conduct or morals; and not a very novel one either, since its basis is evidently the Decalogue; and most of what it emphasizes is to be found in the Old Testament and the writings of the Jewish Fathers. Such preaching, too, has its parallels in the New Testament; much of the Epistle of James is written exactly in the same tone; and several of the Epistles of Paul end with exhortations to a moral life which would be quite familiar to men who knew the best mind of Judaism. A large portion of the teaching of Jesus Himself, as both Jewish and Christian writers have often pointed out, is composed of moral precepts which can be easily discovered in the teachings of the Synagogue and of Gentiles like Epictetus. And the kernel of the whole is clear enough in the great saying of a Jewish prophet, 'What doth the Lord require of thee but honesty and kindness and a humble recognition of God?'

But if there was no more in 'the way' than this, why did those who followed it impress society as a set of peculiar and astonishing people who 'turned the world upside down'? Why did those early travellers on the 'way,' instead of exciting the mild interest roused by Jews and the disciples of the philosophers, find themselves subject to periodic and often very bitter persecution, and end by founding a religion which was, and remains, a unique phenomenon in the world?

The reply will come readily enough. Jesus was not simply a teacher, but a Saviour. Others might say, 'This is the way; walk ye in it.' Jesus gave men the power actually to do so, with joy and triumph. But this is not enough. Jesus certainly did give a new power; but it was not merely the power to obey the Ten Commandments, and to fulfil all, and more than all, the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. And although it would be a magnificent boast to say, 'The Christian walks upright where others fall, and where they succumb to temptation

he conquers '—would that it were always true!—every one who is acquainted with Christian literature would feel that something was wanting. What is it?

The New Way meant a New Attitude.

To find this out, we must revise our previous statement. The new 'way' was the old and familiar way, and yet it was something more; or rather, to put the matter in different words, the new teaching dragged out into the light what was at best implicit and wrapped up in the old. Honesty, kindliness, humility—do they reside in the honest act, the kindly look, the humble bearing, or do they imply an attitude of mind and thought and will? Assuredly they do; otherwise we should have to expect to find Shylock and Mr. Pecksniff and Uriah Heap walking along the 'way.' And since conduct is a matter in which God is concerned, any view of it which is satisfied with an act or an expression is clearly absurd. All this is obvious enough; and yet it takes us immediately a great deal farther than we might expect. For if right conduct implies a certain attitude to other people, what is that attitude?

Curiously enough, most systems of morality have refrained from attempting an answer to this question. They have contented themselves, in practice, with discussing what acts could be called right or wrong, with considering the place of the will in relation to the act, and the relation of a man's conception of his own interest to his reverence for the moral law or the supposed interests of society. One of the greatest of our writers on morals, the German philosopher Kant, expressly ruled out this matter of an attitude to other people altogether. 'You must not think of other people at all,' he said; 'you must think of nothing but the moral law.'

Again, however, the Christian has his answer. 'I know all about the attitude,' he will say; 'it is my duty to treat all men as my neighbours, and to love them.' This sounds better; and it only raises two difficulties, namely, that, as all the psychologists will tell us, love cannot be made into a duty, and that to love everybody, in the sense in which we use that word when we do

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it most honour, seems an impossibility and even an outrage. At any rate, how many of us have succeeded in doing so?

The New Way and 'Love.'

But we must not be frightened at this. Christianity certainly did seem, to its early critics at least, both an impossibility and an outrage. Perhaps it would seem so still if we, its exponents to a complacent world, understood it better. For what do we mean by 'love'? Not, of course, the romantic passion between the sexes. The scholar knows that the word actually used in the New Testament is one which never bears this connotation. Leave this out, and ask yourself what love means, whether between close friends or members of a united family. 'It means,' you will reply, 'three things—delight in personal intercourse with the beloved person, eager desire for his best interest, and readiness to do or surrender anything to secure it.' If we think of Jesus, this will exactly express His attitude, both to God His Father and to men whom He called His brothers; and if we think of ourselves, can we think of anything else as our proper attitude either to God or to men? And if we remember that at present human society seems very largely a tissue of quarrels, rivalries, open conflicts and secret intrigues, and that we Christians are surrounded by people who have very much less of what we consider valuable than we have, we shall see that love, so understood, translates itself into two other words—reconciliation and sharing.

To arrive at this point is not to leave the New Testament, but to come back to it; for what words are more solemnly or arrestingly used than these? What are more characteristic of the new way, whether we think of them in reference to God or to man? We are accustomed to divide our duties into two classes—duties to God and to man; but our two attitudes, to God and to man, seem capable of explanation only by one and the same set of terms. This is in fact the result of passing from the morality of act to the morality of attitude. God is a Person, and we must treat Him as such: men are persons, or are meant to be, and we must treat them as such also. But there is a

difference. God is, or seeks to be, reconciled to us: we have to reconcile men, as they actually are in the world, to ourselves and to Him. God shares with us what He can induce us to receive from Him (the word 'communion' means nothing but 'sharing'): we have to share with men what we can induce them to receive at our hands.

The Kingdom and the Family.

But we can go farther. After all, little is actually said, at least in the first three Gospels, about 'love'; the word occurs but rarely. Much is said about the 'Kingdom of God' or 'of Heaven.' What is this 'Kingdom'? It is obviously what we should call a society; a set of persons in relations of a certain kind to one another. And those relations are clear when we reflect that the society is one which is ruled by a father, and whose members are called brothers of one another. The Kingdom is a family!

Now it is clear that this great family of human beings, of which God is the head, is central in the thoughts of Jesus. Its nearness calls for all men to repent; it may start from the smallest beginnings, but all kinds of strange and uncouth people will press into it, while the most respected and eligible persons will find themselves outside. It is present, yet it is future; and membership in it is well worth suffering and agony; a man might gladly surrender all he has to find his way into it. Are all men members of it? Clearly, no. Are they all meant to be? As clearly, yes. Being the great family that it is, it is composed of all who recognize God as their Father, and treat one another as brothers. But it is more than this. It is not simply a kind of mutual benefit society—'I will give to you as you give to me, and as God gives to us all.' 'Why,' says Jesus, 'that is no better than paganism.' God, as Jesus taught, is the Father of all men; alike of those who recognize His Fatherhood and their sonship, and of those who do not. He makes His sun to rise upon the evil and the good. But yet He cannot be in the complete sense their Father; for father is a relative term—the father implies the son. Therefore He cannot 'share' with them as a

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father could share with those who knew themselves to be his sons; but He is eager to have them in this relation of sonship; His love is upon them all the time. From this it follows that the actual members of His Kingdom, the men who know themselves to be the sons of the Heavenly Father, and have come to love Him, will be full of the same eagerness: the member of the Kingdom will look on all men as his Father does; he will desire their truest interests; he will long to share with them all that he values—most of all the sense of being at home in his Father's house.

This is what is meant when we say that Christianity starts from the fatherly love of God. It is not uncommon, as we have said, to make a distinction between the first commandment and the second, to imagine that we can at any rate love God even when our love to man is weak or non-existent. A vain persuasion! There may be indeed a sentimental affection towards one who is simply thought of as a source of satisfaction and comfortable warmth, physical or spiritual. But when God is known as one to whom the interests of all (even of those of whom we find it most hard to be tolerant) are equally precious, and who longs for them to recognize Him as their Father, is it possible to conceive of any love to God, worthy of the name, which does not go out to others with something of the same yearning? There is no occasion to decide which of the two is the more important—love to man or love to God: the latter is impossible unless it shows itself in the former; and wherever the former truly exists, the essence of the latter will be there also.

Loving and 'Sharing.'

Such, then, is the 'way.' It will include all the morality which we found in the early preaching and in the New Testament itself. God's demand of 'righteousness' has never changed—certainly it has not been put on one side by the proclamation of the gospel. But righteousness is the type of conduct which flows from the consciousness of a personal relation: 'from my knowledge,' as the Christian would say, 'that God has shared everything that He has with me; that He longs to do the same to

every one around me; waking up in me the same longing to share with them whenever I think of His love to me.'

It is no wonder that the first preaching of this Kingdom was heralded by the call to repent, to change the mind and the attitude—for that is what the Greek word properly means. No one can deny that such an attitude does imply a complete *volte-face*, whether sudden or gradual in its action; a total 'transvaluation of values.' The change may have results as curious as Browning imagines to have been observed in Lazarus when he had been recalled by Jesus from death to life; he might view a political catastrophe with placidity, but he would be moved to the depths by a wanton wrong done to a child. On the other hand, given such a conversion, even in a small but resolute body of men, what might not be effected, what growth of mustard seeds to mighty trees, what removal of mountains?

We live in a world, it will be said, where we must take account of practical limitations—where mustard seeds do not grow into trees, and where mountains do not fly off into space. Perhaps the reason why the daring imagination of Jesus leaves us (if we are frank) with a smile of incredulity, is that we have seldom ventured to take quite seriously His doctrine of the Kingdom and our membership of it. We have pondered over the thought of God's love, and tried to find it real even though a thousand facts of experience shrieked against our creed. We have often forgotten that God's love, like everything else in our religion, must be understood, if at all, in terms of sharing; that joy itself must be 'in widest commonalty spread'; or, to put it in another fashion, that every follower of the 'way' will be saying in his heart, as he mixes with his fellow-men in all the multifarious relations of life, 'I claim you for my Lord, my Father and yours.'

In the succeeding chapters of this book it will be our task to consider some of these relations, and ask how the Christian laws of conduct apply in each of them. No attempt will be made to formulate laws or rules; to say, 'This is right, that is wrong.'

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The Christian has to remember that he is not 'under law'; that is, he is not in the position of one who can gain commendation by saying, 'I was told to do this, and I did it.' He is thinking all the time, as we have said repeatedly, in terms of persons, and of that sharing which is the true mark of personal activity. For a person is more than an individual. His life is not one of action, but of action and *reaction*—of working, with means that are owned in common, for a common end. He has passed, like the stricter monks of the mediaeval rule of Cluny, from the first personal pronoun singular to the plural, from 'mine' to 'ours.' The things he values most deeply, 'love and hope and faith's transcendent dower,' joy in life and its beauty, and the sense of God's unfailing favour and the constant presence of Christ—these must be shared if they are to glow with their proper radiance; and what he cannot share in this manner, those material objects which the generality of mankind have agreed to call 'private property,' he will regard as dedicated to the great end, sacred to all who share with him the membership of the heavenly society, and as thus, in some sort, consecrated into communion. The 'way' of this love or fellowship is seen most easily in the Home, where we shall first look for it; but we must also see it in the School, the friendships of youth and manhood, the Workshop and the Factory, Recreation, Public Life, and the World Society of Nations and Races. And, in spite of many blank misgivings, we shall at least be sure of this: that, as we have often said, Christ is the solution of all our problems; and that, in varied aspects of life, it is ours to bear ourselves to others as ever remembering the love of the Father to us all.

II.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE HOME

WE are all members of three communities at least—the Family, the State, and the World. But we were in a family, and knew something about its demands and privileges, before we knew anything about the obligations of the two larger communities. Did the family come first in point of time? Anthropologists are doubtful. A study of those races which seem nearest akin to primitive men—the Australian Bushmen, for instance, or the Veddahs of Ceylon—suggests that men grouped themselves into hordes or even tribes before they knew anything of family ties as we understand them. But for us the family comes first, and influences all our thought of the rest; the law of the mother's knee precedes for us the regulations of the County Council; the father's uplifted hand is known before the policeman's truncheon; and we have to settle the thorny questions of the nursery before we launch out into the not much more perplexing problems of the municipality.

Some never get so far as citizenship of the world; some never learn to take an active part in the life of the State or the community around them; they pay taxes and rates, they vote, perhaps, and grumble; but, for the rest, they go about their own lawful occasions and keep themselves to themselves, or, it may be, even busy themselves about saving their souls. And some never even learn the law of family life—individuals who happen to live in the same houses as others; who, without any choice of their own, are related to certain other people, and who make their own way through the jungle of rivals, neighbours, and even brothers and sisters, children and wives, which surrounds them.

The Family and the Home.

But if we are members of the first of these three communities

in any true and vital sense, we shall find our way into membership of the second, and, in time, of the third. On the other hand, if one has not learnt the deeper meaning of being a child or a brother, a husband or a wife, it is impossible, save in the rarest instances, to know the secret of devotion to city or country, or the deep and subtle ties, as ennobling as they are enthralling, that bind us to the human race.

So much for the family. But the title at the head of this chapter is the Home. There is no real distinction. The family has its seat and centre in the home. We all know the melancholy distinction between homes and mere houses. In some dwellings it is impossible to feel 'at home'; in others we recognize and rejoice in the feeling at once. We greet or miss the 'spirit' that makes the home. And what is that? To put it at its best (and why should we do otherwise?), it is the eagerness to share all that each member of the home really values. Families are as various as the climates in which they are found; but what differentiates them is the amount of common life and interest. This is the useful point of comparison between the loose aggregations among the Australian blackfellows, the close, rigid, and passionately loved joint family of India, the combination of home and 'club' life in Borneo or Polynesia, and the assemblage, beneath one enormous roof, of the 'families' of brothers and cousins in the Serbian 'zadruga.' Families are the closer as there are more possessions and interests to share, and a keener desire to share them. Even in a back-street tenement, which would drive most of us to despair or to Bolshevism, we may find a father unable to enjoy anything unless the wife and children are 'in it'; and the sickly child, like Dickens's pathetic Tiny Tim, only happy when the feast and the fun, like the pain, are felt by all.

Sharing has two sides—an economic and a psychic. There must be something to share, as well as the desire to share it. All family life implies the existence of a family income and a family dwelling. How can we expect a home, when the family has been disinherited of the instruments of its proper activity? This reflection would lead us too far afield. What is important for

us is that the desire to share, if it really exists, will 'find out the way.' And what is love itself, at its best, with all its magnificent self-surrender and its enormous demands, save the resolve that there shall be nothing, neither experience nor possession, which cannot be enjoyed, and even used, directly or indirectly, in common? ¹

The Home in the New Testament.

But what has religion to say to all this? The New Testament seems to frown on the family. A man must leave his father and his mother. 'My relations,' said Jesus in effect, 'are—all who do what I want them to do.' And did not Paul appear to rate celibacy distinctly above family life? We Protestants, even if we do not, like the Roman Catholics, use the word 'religious' specially for those who have taken a vow of celibacy, have often been content to leave family life to itself if we can make sure of the new fellowship of the Church.

Yet the true end of the Church's activity is the society of the family, whether we work for it as celibates or not. To Paul, especially in his earlier days, the time was short; from many a foreign missionary to-day, as from the mediaeval monks, the conditions of work demand a special detachment; and those who listened to Jesus were often then, as now, bound to low ideals by which, if unrepressed, true family life would in time be destroyed.

But Jesus loved the simple life of the household, whether He found it at Capernaum or Nazareth or Bethany; and the disciples were no early Franciscans, vowed to a life of homeless wandering. 'Go back to your own people,' said Jesus to one of His converts, 'and share the good news with them.'

We cannot over-emphasize this truth. Life is a partnership; and partnership must begin at home. The Church, which has learnt to think of love as partnership, must be the truest home-builder, or it fails.

Is the Home Disappearing?

'But all this,' we shall be told, 'is against the spirit of the

¹ See *The Home*, Copec Commission Report, vol. iii. (Longmans).

age. To-day life is centrifugal. We must accept the fact, and adapt ourselves, and our homes, to it. Young people must have, or they will take, their freedom.' Why has the change come to-day? Why are the old sanctities breaking down only in our own unfortunate time? Because it is now so much easier to be selfish and independent. Fresh rivals to the home are ever rising up—the bicycle, the motor-car, the cinema, the dance-room, and even the study circle!

But we must not think that human nature has changed. The 'Cotter's Saturday Night' is not more out of date, or in date, in one period than in another. The Report of the Poor Law Commission of ninety years ago asserted that among large sections of the working classes family life had disappeared. If youngsters despise family councils and desert family prayers, it is often because neither exist for them. The child still issues from the mother's womb. Brother and sister may be sundered by years of misunderstanding and suspicion, until some flood of calamity or emotion unites them at last, and Tom and Maggie go down in one last embrace, as when 'hand in hand they roamed the daisied fields together.' The spirit of the home is always there. If it could have been destroyed, it would have disappeared long ago. But, like all good gifts, it cannot be simply received; it must be achieved. It is achieved when each member of the family learns to make his possessions and activities available for others.

This is a pleasantly simple but at the same time a rather disconcertingly far-reaching rule. It must apply to golf and bridge (or where should we draw the line?), to lesson-books and tennis; to the husband's business worries (every husband and wife will remember Portia's grave fears about being 'Brutus's harlot, not his wife'), the wife's ill-health, the children's disappointments. Our amusements must be made to justify themselves by adding to the common stock of good-humour, vivacity, and versatility, or they become mere selfishness. Even our troubles, by being treated, for the sake of the general happiness, as if they did not exist, or where that is impossible, by being

brought into an atmosphere of sympathy and combined determination to get rid of them, will find a justification for their own existence.

Concentric Circles.

The true end of the Church's activity, we said, is the society of the family. But this must not be misunderstood. It must not be taken to suggest a kind of refined group self-centredness. *Egoisme à deux*, or *à cinq*, is as fatal to all concerned as the individual selfishness of a miser or a debauchee. Partnership, once begun in the home, cannot stop there. The circle is not closed. If the spirit of the home exists, it makes something wider than the home. Our own home life is the means whereby we make home life for others. And this in two ways.

First, the vigour and buoyancy that come from this home partnership, both in amusements and interests and work and troubles, are communicable, and insist on being communicated. The very conditions of modern life 'lower the garden walls.' And a family that understands what we have been describing will be, whether intentionally or not, an asset to its neighbourhood. The more you love one another, the more, by some beautiful natural law, you will desire friends from the outside.

Secondly, the fellowship of our own homes teaches the wider fellowship with homes around us. We might express this in another way. When we understand, from our own home life, what is really valuable to ourselves, in our smaller community, we know what to try to secure for others. All decent people to-day recognize to some extent the claims of social service; we are all conscious of some desire to make other people happier. But we are faced by two difficulties. The first is that our best endeavours, or the best endeavours of others, so often end in failure. 'Give people better houses, and they will only turn them into slums; baths are used for storing coal; better wages only mean more expenditure on drink or betting or vice; are the well-to-do artisans really happier than the often quite jovial poor?' And so on, until it hardly seems worth while to try to do anything for others at all. The second is that the calls for

service are so various and so complex. Let any one read the twelve volumes of the Copec Report (modest as they are in size), and he will probably ask, 'Where am I to begin? Who is to teach me the rudiments of any one of these problems? And where am I to find time to learn what is required? Every problem requires an expert!'

The True Way of Giving.

Now, both these difficulties can be met; and they are met when we remember that the soul of all reformation is the reformation of the home. For the first ('What is the good of giving when gifts are so often useless?'), our law of partnership (as we may call it) tells us that the real source of value is not the object that any one of us may possess, but the use that we make of it for, or with, others; and, more than this, the power and the desire to share it in this way. The gift of an object or 'thing' may often simply minister to selfishness, and so do positive harm. Certainly it were better not to give at all than give with that result. 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth.' Let him consider what it does consist in, and let him share that.

The best gifts cannot indeed be given at all; they can only be shared. Infinitely better than the new toy itself, given to the child on its birthday, which might, by being snatched away or broken, be matter simply for tears, is the joy which touches all at seeing, and increasing the delight of the little fellow in his new-found treasure. Joy, like hope and capacity and knowledge and patience and love, can never be given; it can only be shared. It is of course far easier to give money or other objects than to share joy and hope; but it is neither so useful nor so Christian. 'Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I unto thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, *rise up and walk!*' Partnership in the home is the teacher of social service outside.

But (the second difficulty) social service to-day is so complex! This is the real reason why so many people of goodwill are kept from it. It takes time to begin; and while they are considering,

and cautiously trying to avoid mistakes, their available time is gone, and they must turn to more immediate tasks. Social service indeed has changed considerably even during the last generation. It is becoming more and more a matter of the expert. Many services that were left to private initiative are now undertaken by the community; and some professional training is quite rightly demanded. But this only increases, and fulfils, the responsibility of the Christian home. For, first, such homes are needed to produce the atmosphere, and the material, for the increasing demands of the future; and, secondly, it is such homes that must supply the impetus to society for the constant and steady struggle with social evil that is essential. The price of freedom is, as it always has been, eternal vigilance. It is easy to create an excitement over some scandal—the state of the streets, or the dangers of a slum area, or the prevalence of betting. This may do more harm than good. We need the deep conviction that whatever has been given must be shared, which after all lies at the heart of Christ's message, and the inability to enjoy what is denied to others without a struggle to repair the inequality. Only these, humanly speaking, can sharpen and steady the conscience of the community. The machinery for social salvation should be found in every department of the State's activity. The power-house is at the fireside.

Practical Questions.

A dozen practical questions have been left untouched. How many children should there be in the ideal family? How many servants should be kept when income allows more than the minimum number? How much should be spent on education and on amusements? Or again, how much freedom should be allowed to the children? How much should they be told about their future duties as parents? Adequate discussion of any one of these would call for more than the space of this chapter.¹

But no uniformly applicable answers can ever be given. There will be as many answers as there are families to ask for them.

¹ See E. S. Wood's *Everyday Religion*. S.C.M.

Yet there is one principle by which the answers can always be worked out. The family exists for the community, and in deciding upon its possessions, its activities, and its enjoyments, it must aim at service to the community. When this is forgotten, every question becomes almost insoluble, because every question resolves itself into a calculation of money or comfort or convenience; that is to say, it is saturated with unknown factors. But the 'will to share' itself instructs those who would carry it out. Love is an unerring light. Joy is its own security. Every question of household economy simplifies itself when the aim of the questioner is to make all that he has—time, education, money, opportunities for amusement—ultimately available, in the richest possible way, for the service of his neighbours.

And so we come back to the Bible. The Bible, to those who want 'judges and dividers' over them, is the most disappointing of books. But it is clear on one point—that the only satisfaction or blessedness lies in using God's gifts for God's purpose; that this purpose is 'the general good of man'; and that, when satisfaction is sought in this way, it will never fail to be found. For this quest and discovery the simplest and most familiar scene is the home with its intimate sanctities, the clearest type on earth of the Kingdom of Heaven, and of 'pure religion breathing household laws.'

III.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE SCHOOL

EDUCATION is the affair of the expert. Parents may be supreme in the home; but when is a parent allowed to interfere in the school? Even complaints and requests are apt to be treated brusquely by the school authorities. The 'parson,' though his traditional interest in religious education is recognized, is given to understand that he must not interfere outside that rather limited area. The right place, therefore, for such a subject as we now approach might appear to be a technical or professional journal; and the teacher may turn from anything that we can say with contempt or pity.

Still, education, however highly trained its agents, is a service that is rendered to the community, and the community has the responsibility of deciding, in the long run, what sort of education it desires, as well as how much it is prepared to give for it. It is not the duty of the expert to decide what education shall be given, but to assist the community to a wise judgement; and if the community is unable or unwilling to decide for itself, it cannot complain if it is ill-served.

Moreover, as we shall see, there are certain things that Christianity stands for in society, and an ideal that she is bound to cherish for the men and women therein. She will therefore have her own demands to make of the education authorities, or of the community that controls or ought to control them; and these demands she must secure.

Education and the Bible.

But what are they? The evangelical Christian naturally thinks of the Bible; and here he is surprised to find very little on the subject. Paul indeed tells his followers that children must

obey their parents 'in the Lord,' and that parents must not goad their children into anger. This does not seem to take us very far towards a theory of education—though perhaps farther than a good many parents have succeeded in going. Jesus, as all will agree, gave the child a unique importance in His teaching; Juvenal's great words, 'Maxima debetur pueris reverentia' (You cannot treat a child with too great care and respect), are a kind of far-off echo of the saying that 'in heaven their angels . . .'. But if Jesus said a great deal about the place of the child in His Father's regard, did He say anything that would guide us as to the child's education? What He did say seems merely negative: 'place no stumbling-block in the child's way; if any one trips up a little child, no language can describe the punishment he deserves.' Does that take us any farther than Paul?

It takes us, in truth, a great deal farther than most communities would care to realize. As to the importance of the child in the community, Jesus has said more than the most vigorous champion of education has ever ventured to say. His words surely mean that, whatever else the Church may neglect, she must see to the education of the child as her *first* charge, or they mean nothing. She may of course do it indirectly through the expert and the professional, but do it she must. And if the teaching about the stumbling-block seems merely negative, it has two very far-reaching and surprising corollaries.

Two Demands.

First, the society in which the child grows up must be purged of anything that could 'trip up' the child, or lead him wrong. What would a town or village be like in which there was no evil example to mislead a child? Knowing as we do how plastic and imitative is the child's nature, the reformation of manners implied by these words of Jesus is nothing less than utopian. We are left wondering at the inducements to evil which crowd on youthful eyes and ears in street, school, and factory, and profoundly thankful that, protected by some native innocence, the child has again and again escaped the perils to which our carelessness and vice have exposed him.

Secondly, the child must have the best education that we can devise. To be satisfied with the second-best, or to give the child less when we could give him more, is surely to handicap him, and 'trip him up.' If we were dealing with another kind of ideal, this might be held an exaggeration; but one who thinks of the children as the objects of God's especial attention, can stop short at nothing less. A Christian community, then, will set itself to care for the education of its children with at least the same assiduity as was urged by the great Athenian philosopher of the fourth century before Christ. Readers of Plato's *Republic* will remember how the whole fabric and hope of his ideal State was based upon the training in 'music and gymnastic' which was provided for the children; and how no considerations of parental proprietorship or affection were allowed to interfere with the child's growth in a kind of fair and healthful pasture-ground. In his latter treatise, the *Laws*, he adds a good many practical details which have interest even for the educationalist of to-day, and, as an acute commentator has remarked, he became the inventor of the secondary school.

Perhaps it is too much to hope for, that either the politician or the ecclesiastic, in the modern State, could secure what the ancient philosopher required; but if we can think of the Church as a body standing for the enforcement of the known will of Christ, we must envisage her as upholding before the community a definite ideal for the training of children, and taking every possible measure to carry it out.

Two Types.

But what is the ideal? Two types may readily be distinguished. Here is the description of a well-known educationalist: 'Accuracy, ready understanding, quickness of calculation, clearness of exposition, logical coherence, observation of facts, facility in manipulating fine tools, appreciation of language, observation of character—these are the effective points of a really educated man.' The following words of Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, formerly Minister of Education, though actually used of a university education, may be taken to describe the other type:

it is to train students ' in disinterested intellectual habits, to give them a vision of what real learning is, to refine taste and inform judgement, to enlarge curiosity, to substitute for a low and material outlook on life a lofty view of its resources and demands.'

We may spare ourselves the labour of comparing these two. Neither can be considered complete without the other; perhaps neither could be attained without the other. But, even when combined, they would leave their product, from the point of view of a Christian society, a most unsatisfactory creature. He might indeed be no more than a very clever and refined beast of prey. The education that we are in search of will train the child to be a loyal member of the community, to find the satisfaction of life in function rather than in acquisition, and to understand by that function a steadfast and co-operative service.

That education must be unified, all educationalists are now ready to admit. And, as a matter of fact, education has in all ages been accommodated to the views of life held by those who were for the time in charge of it. This is equally true of the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium* of the Middle Ages, the steady and thorough study of the classics under Elizabeth, and the stress laid on ' practical ' and scientific subjects by the acquisitive society of a later period. The confusion in the educational world of to-day is really due to a confusion of ideals among those who can make their voices heard in the direction of education. Is education intended to turn the child into a man who can be relied upon to ' get on,' to make a fortune and out-distance his competitors; or is it to enable him to understand the world of men and women in which he will have to live, so as to treat them as allies in working for the ends which they were meant to secure?

Two Educational Movements.

When the question is put in this form, it is clear that the discussion of what is to be taught will have to be joined to the consideration of the way in which the teaching is to be carried out. And it is significant that two of the most prominent factors in the modern educational world lay the chief stress upon method.

Every one has heard of the Montessori school and of the Dalton method; and most people are aware that behind these and other 'fads' (as their enemies would still call them) is the design to teach the child to work for a self-chosen end, with his own sense of initiative and responsibility; yet to work in co-operation with others, and regarding the teacher, not as the imparter of knowledge, but as a helper and guide to the pupil in discovering his knowledge for himself. Such a process demands far more from the teacher than the old-fashioned pedagogy; but the self-effacement, it is claimed, has its reward in the rapid advance of the bright children, and the discovery in the dull ones of unsuspected powers and interests.

Every one, too, knows something of the new study of child-psychology, and its application, not only to the 'young delinquent,' as it is now customary to call him, but to the awkward and abnormal child, and indeed to the whole theory of teaching. There is nothing very mysterious in child-psychology, as it is being studied at present, though some of its results are surprising enough. It is founded mainly on three convictions: that most of the difficulties and misdemeanours of children, trivial and serious, arise from emotions whose source lies buried beneath his consciousness; that these create a desire to revolt or to escape from the world, which issues in acts whose rationale the child at best only dimly understands; and that what he needs to save him from himself is a friend whom he can trust, who will arouse his own self-confidence, and give him courage to face his world with open eyes. This process, too, makes vast demands on the teacher or guide.¹ Nor is it uniformly successful. The whole study is even yet in its infancy. But it has succeeded where other methods have failed, and it has forced us to see that, where we are dealing with the weak, the disappointing, and the problematical, we must employ the methods of the physician rather than of the judge; that the child does not need punishment, but healing and salvation.

¹ See, for instance, Burt, *The Young Delinquent* (Longmans); or Miriam van Waters, *Youth in Conflict* (Methuen).

Knowledge the Means, a Person the End.

Now, it is not the purpose of this chapter to advocate the claims of either the methods of Signora Montessori or the application of psycho-analysis to the treatment of difficult children. The two movements have been thus briefly described, not only because they are attracting the attention of all who are interested in education to-day, but because no one can study them without being reminded of those relations between Christianity and education which we have previously observed. For the Christian can never be satisfied with an education which looks simply to the acquisition of knowledge—a knowledge which may be prostituted to sheer self-seeking and greed. For him, the acquisition of knowledge is never an end in itself; it is a means to produce a person, as we have learnt to use the word—a centre of initiative, self-conscious and self-possessed, and yet a member of a society, reaching his ends only with their co-operation and in partnership with them. Whatever will lead to this must attract the Christian, and he must equally be attracted by a method which sets itself to deal with the weak, the potential or actual failures of the school or the world, and which relies on friendship, patience, sympathy, and the reconstruction of the child's outlook on life. He will find himself in a dozen ways reminded of the reconstructive and redemptive activity that shines in the Gospels.

Hence, when he insists that the community shall regard the school as of more importance than the Stock Exchange or the Chamber of Commerce, he will go farther. He will not identify his loyalty to Christ and Christ's little ones with any one educational method or treatment; but he will insist that the principles he finds in his religion should have their true place in the school; and if he finds, among the teachers of his time, an unmistakable approach to these principles, he will thankfully use his influence to see that such an approach may be encouraged and developed. To carry out his intentions, he must rely on the expert; but he must be clear as to the ends themselves; knowing that the goal of education must be to produce persons, and that

the teacher must be the friend, the counsellor, and, where necessary, the healer.

The Expert.

We have said that these two new ideas of education increase the demands made on the teacher. That is true; but they also go far to facilitate the task of the man who, not being himself a professional teacher, yet feels a special responsibility for the teaching of the two subjects which we have left to the last—sex and religion.

Obviously, if the expert is ever needed, he is needed here. Yet it is here that the non-expert can, and must, do more than in any other part of the vast field of education. Of what can directly be taught about sex, and when, and how, we can say nothing here. The special literature must be consulted.¹ But, at least for the normal child, no influence is stronger or more efficacious than that of an older friend, who knows from his (or her) own experience what the boy or girl will have to face in the way of physical and mental changes, and who, with an honest and pure and loving heart, exercises the influence of a stainless life—an influence which most children are surprisingly quick to feel. And every Christian community ought to have a number of such 'friends,' sufficient at least for the children for whom it feels itself responsible.

The Teaching of Religion.

What, then, is to be said of the teaching of religion? Of late years the expert has been laying down the law in regard to the Sunday School in a fashion that has helped to bring many Sunday Schools somewhere near the level of efficiency in the Day School; while he has often irritated teachers who, for whatever reason, prefer the simpler idea of talking 'as they may be led' to a group of boys and girls before them. The methods of the expert have come to stay; they are only harmful when we think that they are going to do the work, instead of helping us to do it. To rely on 'talking as we are led' is even more harmful; partly because, as someone has wittily put it, God fills the mountains

¹See, for instance, N. March, *Towards Racial Health* (Routledge).

with marble, but He never builds a Parthenon; partly because talking by itself is not religious education at all. If it were, we should certainly have to wait for the expert.

As things are, when the expert has done his best (and the wise Church will see that he does it), the teaching of religion will still need the men and women of strong sympathy, simple and upright life, and keen interest in boys and girls, who have brains enough to follow, in their actual lessons, the hints that the expert can give, and who can make their pupils feel (though never putting it into words), 'He will stick to me; I can talk to him; and how I should love to be like him!' When a Christian can inspire such thoughts as these, he will inevitably lead his pupils to his Master. And if a Church has not a store of such Christians, it is really time she mended her ways and found them.

'Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth.'
'Ye have not, because ye ask not.' We groan over the burden of the Education Rate; we lament the inadequacy of our Sunday Schools. Can it be that we have yet to grow really anxious to see 'Christianity in Action' in our schools?

IV. ADOLESCENCE

JUST twenty-two years ago Professor George Stanley Hall, of Chicago, published his monumental two volumes on *Adolescence*. Written in a curious 'Americanese,' they followed on suggestions already thrown out by William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and by Starbuck in his *Psychology of Religion*—really a study of adolescent religion. Since then, the study of adolescence has been carried on with great energy, both on the physical and the psychological side. The physical changes, indeed, that appear at adolescence are well marked in both sexes: in boys, the break in the voice, the changes in form and the bodily organs, and similar changes in girls, have led many writers to speak about a crisis, accompanied by a similar crisis in the mind and the consciousness. Passing out from boyhood or girlhood, the adolescent enters a period of mental 'storm and stress'; religion makes a new appeal; and conversion, if that appeal is rightly presented, is naturally to be looked for at this turning-point of life. At the same time there is a new consciousness of sex; corresponding to the maturing of the bodily organs, various glands, we are told, pour new secretions into the blood; the imagination is filled with new objects and phantasies; and desires begin to grope wildly and passionately towards satisfactions but dimly apprehended. Later on the *tempo* slows down; the rapid rate of living could hardly continue the same for more than a few years; the excitement of the crisis, for good or ill, passes; but the results of the crisis, beneficial or dangerous, remain.

The 'Crisis' of Adolescence.

Undoubtedly, in such an account as this, there is a great deal of exaggeration. In the first place, the period of adolescence is by

no means the same in every individual. With girls, indeed, it is said generally to begin sooner than with boys; and it may last with both sexes for a longer or a shorter time. Some would put the whole period at about ten years, from the approach of puberty to the age of twenty-two or over; others would confine the period to the three or four years immediately following the beginning of the physical changes. Moreover, the mental change is often slight or even unnoticeable. Many men and women have been conscious of no crisis; sex has not made itself felt till a far later age. Some, again, have passed through the experience of conversion when they were at the age of sixteen or thereabouts; but others will point to childhood as the time when they first became conscious of sin or of the love of God; others again will say that they cannot speak of a time when they 'found God,' because they do not know that they had ever lost Him. The truth is that it is impossible to generalize; both mental and bodily movements are 'keyed up' differently in different persons; and, in addition, environment, which may, with some, conduce to the sense of change, and even of stress, in those formative years, makes for quiet and almost unnoticed development with others.

The New World.

Still, when all this has been allowed for, the fact remains that, when the time of puberty is at hand, there is both a new sensitiveness and a new suggestibility. As Irving King¹ has expressed it, the adolescent 'may be said to be hypersensitive to all forms of social suggestion.' Hitherto the child has lived in a world of his own. He has not noticed very much of what is going on around him, save what is of immediate interest. To a great deal that older people tell him or ask him, he is often quite disappointingly unresponsive. From about the age of ten, his bodily development is somewhat slow. But when he reaches the age of thirteen or fourteen, all is different. His senses grow more acute. His nerves are a-tingle. His blood flows with a new force and richness. He notices things he had never noticed before; the world breaks out into colour, and even smell; the

¹ *The Psychology of Child Development* (Chicago, 1905), p. 228.

very touch of things will thrill him. Most boys, and girls too, at this age, find themselves treated in a new way; they are no longer regarded as children—this, whether it was true or not in the time of our grandparents, is certainly true to-day. Thus the adolescent lives in a world that is actually larger. It not only speaks more clearly to him; there is much more of it to speak. This growing world, too, is a world not only of things but of persons. Whether he likes it or not, he must constantly be adjusting himself to new circumstances, and be prepared for new treatment. He lives as one who is on the *qui vive*; and the curiosity, which is itself a mark of the enlarging life, is continually increased by the objects offered for its exercise. ‘O brave new world, that has such people in’t.’ Miranda lived in the world of adolescence.

Self-Assertion and Self-Depreciation.

But if the world is new, the youth is new also. For in this new world he has to learn to comport himself. It makes new demands on him, and he must be ready for them. He is not going to allow himself to be ‘let down’ by it. He manifests an unwonted self-assertion. And if he feels, as he can hardly help doing, that he is really ignorant of what surrounds him, that he is always being surprised, he is the more determined not to show it. But the self-confidence of youth is often half a sham. He tries to carry it off bravely, but he does not always succeed. Sometimes he fails lamentably. Self-assertion gives way to self-depreciation. For the new is sometimes frightening. And more frightening is the thought that his ignorance or inadequacy may be found out. In the more timid natures this self-depreciation may grow for the time habitual. With others it will mean a defence mechanism (as the psychologists call it) of self-will or defiance or positive rudeness. The less he understands people (like the youth, discovering what incalculable creatures girls are), the more he will profess to despise or neglect them. And when they are connected with authority, the more determined will be the pose of revolt. Yet, curiously enough, this period is also the period of hero-worship. For the first time, he is conscious of wanting to be something different himself, and he sees this something different in

others—what he longs to be, or what he knows he could never be. Possibly the objects of his devotion never suspect that he is modelling himself on them, even down to their tricks of manner or dress. He is thus both more and less himself than he was before. No wonder his elders find him hard to understand.¹

Normal and Abnormal.

As we have said, the actual character of the manifestations depends a great deal on the environment. Let us imagine what ought perhaps to be the normal course. The boy or girl is still at school, and the masters and mistresses know what to expect and what to guard against. They prepare the ground for the eagerness for new interests. The class-work grows more fascinating, as the pupils find themselves expected to reason for themselves and make or create things. New standards of strength or wisdom or beauty are shown to them. High spirits are allowed for, and given due vent. Instead of dashing themselves against old restrictions, now more than ever irksome, they are encouraged to think of life as a field of prizes to be nobly fought for and duties to be bravely carried through. Self-assertion and self-depreciation are combined and transformed into a sense of responsibility, the high resolve to do some great thing with life, joined to the humble recognition of a demand to be met. At this period more than at any other, before the maxims of self-interest and self-advancement have come to be taken for granted, the true end of life reveals itself as service. Even when this is not very apparent, the youth will become conscious of a vocation. As a wise head master used to say, who lived long before we talked of psycho-analysis or the new psychology, 'I do not expect a boy to take life very seriously till he is fourteen; after that he ought to be making up his mind as to what he is going to do.'

But now let us consider what certainly ought to be—but can hardly be actually called—the abnormal. The boy who grows up in 'mean streets'—not necessarily the slums—finds himself, just

¹ Readers of George Meredith will remember the admirable studies of adolescence in *Richard Feverel* and *Harry Richmond*; Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, for adolescence of another type, is equally illuminating.

at this period of enlightenment, suddenly free from the restraint of school, and equally free, as he goes to his new employment, from the restraints of his parents at home. He has to slave or drudge at his work, and perhaps is made to feel the tyranny of his older work-mates; but when work is over, he plunges into the new-found freedom of the streets. If his parents remind him that he still has duties to them—beyond giving them some of his wage—he may grow openly rebellious. But the new world of which he is thus made free is very different from the world of his more fortunate cousin, still at a public school. It is a world of varied excitements, and nearly all the excitements are connected with a possible clash with constituted authority. He is almost certain to start gambling—if he has not started long before; he learns to drink; and, worse still, he is surrounded by the cruder fascinations of sex. The normal adolescent may hardly be conscious of sex till a later period. He does not dream of connecting with sex the new and rather bewildering promptings for which he can find a dozen other outlets. It cannot be denied, indeed, that even for him the suggestions which he meets are now far more open and undisguised than they were; but the youth of the slums has no chance of missing them. To live in an over-crowded court, to be familiar with the life of the streets at all hours of the day and night, to hear the language of the men where he works, and to stare at the films in the cheap cinema, is to hear more clearly than any words could put it, ‘Your passions are awake; satisfy them.’

What is true of the boy is often twice as true of the girl. For with the girl the changes should come more slowly; the whole of her life-rhythm is slower; and with her instinct of self-assertion more of shyness is naturally mixed. For her, therefore, freed from restraints when she needs them even more than her brother, the education of the streets is yet more brutal. ‘The girls of to-day,’ you say, ‘are just naughty.’ Not naughtier, madam, than their grandmothers; but the surroundings of to-day do their best to turn the storm of adolescence into shipwreck. It is no wonder that, when the

rhythm has slowed down, you blame the years of adolescence; but the blame lies elsewhere. You cannot change adolescence; but you can change the world in which adolescence has to be met.

The 'Crisis' a Transition.

Even with the best environment, adolescence is a passage, a transition; and as such it has dangers of its own. All life, as the psychologists are aware, is a journey from one stage to another. Happiness depends on being ready for the transition when the time for it arrives. The child must learn to cut itself free from its mother's apron-strings; the boy must learn to make friends, first with young people of his own sex, and then of the other. The youth must be ready to meet the world, and not to fear it. But at each passage there is the danger of stopping and drawing back—a 'fixation,' as it is called. Of all these transitions, adolescence may be specially frightening. The shy or nervous soul fears the new sensations and the contradictions of which he is conscious in himself. He is a puzzle to himself, and he wants to get back to the warm sense of protectedness that he knew. He is lonely; his world is a world not only of strangers but of enemies. Perhaps some shock, dimly remembered or quite forgotten, intensifies his sense of secret misery. And then he tries to rebel; he breaks out in some only half-premeditated act, and before he knows it, to the surprise of his parents and himself, he finds himself a problem, or even a criminal.

Initiation and Confirmation.

It will now be easy to see why the adolescent has special need of religion. Most uncivilized or 'primitive' tribes of whom we have any information practise rites of initiation upon the boys, and generally also the girls, at the age of puberty. Some of these are almost unbelievably cruel; but they all appear to have the three-fold purpose of testing the courage of the postulant, instructing him in tribal lore and the duties of the clansman, and the impartation of the knowledge of sex. All this, of course, means a ceremony that is distinctly religious; for all such knowledge, to the 'primitive' mind, is inseparable from religion. In more developed and 'humane' religions, the

process is nearer to what we understand as 'confirmation.' To the Protestant adolescent, accustomed as he often is, or was, to appeals to seek forgiveness and to be saved from sins that would otherwise bring damnation, the period of adolescence may be one of terror, leaving perhaps a seared or an emancipated conscience. These religious terrors are said to be far more rare in the Catholic Church, since the Catholics have developed a much more carefully thought-out system of instruction. Be this as it may, the current neglect of preparation for religious life in the Protestant Churches is nothing less than tragic. Theoretically, in the Anglican Church, confirmation secures this preparation; but it is in many cases merely haphazard and nominal; while among the Free Churches, save where some zealous minister thinks out a plan for himself, it is practically non-existent.¹

This is not the place to sketch out a syllabus; the syllabus will naturally vary with the world in which it is to be used; but its preparation will be almost as easy as it is urgent, when we recognize that among the various results of adolescence is generally included a new appreciation of what religion really stands for. To the sense of duty, of responsibility, of vocation, religion makes a paramount appeal; it can direct into the best and highest channels the instincts for self-assertion and self-depreciation; it can rouse and guide all the latent impulses to chivalry and devotion; and it can keep in its due place the sense of sex. Instincts, the psychologists tell us, must be 'sublimated'; these half-blind and perplexing impulses to action must be given the broadest and most self-forgetful way of working themselves out. There is no sublimation like that afforded by religion. For to religion self-denial and self-fulfilment are one. We affirm ourselves and reach the true goal of our powers when we regard our own private interests and cares as if they did not exist. And that synthesis of opposites is the climax of the work of the practical psychologist.

A Friend.

We are most ourselves when we are least ourselves. But what,

¹ See Copec Reports, vol. iv. pp. 80ff.

for the psychologist, is a triumph, if indeed he can attain to it at all, is plain every-day knowledge to the instructed teacher of Christianity. For to him the centre of his work and thought is Christ; and how does one come to Christ, save as one loses oneself and finds oneself? The preceding account has made it sufficiently clear that to help the adolescent one must explain him to himself, and reveal to him the laws of his own being at this perplexing stage. The secret of the law of his being is the end for which he was made—to find Christ, or rather, to be found of Him.

‘The adolescent,’ says Professor King, ‘is far better off if his equilibrium can be sustained by social suggestion rather than overturned by it.’ The teacher who is no expert may well fear that this is too delicate and complicated a task for him. But most of us do get through adolescence somehow. And we who have done so know that we have had a friend—perhaps many friends—who could explain to us ourselves and our world; who were not impatient or angry; who proved to us that they believed in us when we were far from believing in ourselves, whether we meant to let them see this or not; and who showed us what we could do, and whom we could serve. There are a hundred ways of showing this friendship to boys and girls; we could nearly all do it if we cared to take the trouble, or felt the divine passion. For a Christian, to be a friend is to reveal *the* Friend; and by His comradeship and redeeming love every problem of adolescence is finally solved.

V. FRIENDSHIP

MOST of the well-known examples of friendship have come to us from Greece. Orestes and Pylades, Achilles and Patroclus, Theseus and Peirithous, Damon and Pythias—it seems as if the Greek heroes went naturally in pairs. And against these the Hebrews have only given us the instance of David and Jonathan—although that is perhaps as beautiful as anything that Greece ever imagined. And Greece has given us, too, the most thoughtful treatise on Friendship that was ever written. It is, indeed, so saturated with Greek thought and Greek presuppositions, that to an Englishman it sounds cold and repellent. For the Greek knew nothing of romance—or, the little he knew, he suspected. He would never give himself away. ‘Never go too far,’ he said. ‘Always be able to pull up. Always be sure of your end, and see that you are aiming at it.’

A Greek Hymn of Friendship.

Accordingly, when Aristotle sets out to describe friendship, he begins with its aims. Friendship is of three kinds, he notes—according as the friends aim at pleasure (like the young), or utility (like the old), or the good (like all true friends). The last is the only abiding friendship, and of course it is possible only for those who are themselves good. For the good man loves what is good, and therefore, in loving his friend, he will love what is good in his friend: but if he is good, there will be something good in himself; this too he will love; and thus he will love in his friend what he loves in himself; in loving his friend, he loves himself—his true or ideal self, at any rate. Again, all friendship is an association of some kind or another—it involves some kind of sharing of aims or of activities. This is true even of the casual associations or friendships formed on a

voyage or a journey. But when we think of the friendship of good men, we are thinking of an association of the highest and most beautiful kind, an association in the service of the good itself, of the noblest ends of man, where each seeks and finds himself in the courageous action and exalted ideals of the other.

In such simple yet profound language, Aristotle in his Greek way sings his praise of friendship. And to some, as they ponder over it, it will seem beautiful enough to have deserved a place in the Bible. Is it one of those things, they will perhaps ask, which the Greeks saw and the Jews missed? If the Jews did miss it, the reason is not difficult to discover. The Jews—those of them at any rate who could, like Aristotle, preserve their thoughts for later ages—were not interested in the good; they flung all their thought on God. They were far more romantic (in the true sense of the word) than the Greeks. They could not stop short of anything less than an ideal person. For this reason the greatest Jews did not make friends readily; or rather, they passed through friendship, and went out at the other end, so to speak, into devotion to God.

Greeks and Jews and Christians.

For instance, the relations between Jeremiah and Baruch, and between Paul and Timothy or Luke or Silas, come very near to friendship. But they stopped short. Baruch was useful to Jeremiah 'for the ministry'; and if a stern word of the Lord came for Baruch which it would be hard for any one friend to hear from the lips of another, it had to be said all the same. No one, we suspect, could ever have exercised a subtler or more delightful fascination than Paul; but if you stood in his or the gospel's way, he would withstand you to your face, even if you were Peter or Barnabas himself. Paul would never have dreamt of keeping at his side, like Socrates, an Alcibiades or a Critias.

Another wise Greek, Bias, is reported to have said, 'Always treat a friend as if he might some day become an enemy, and an enemy as if he might some day become a friend.' And although this sounds entirely unlike Jesus, yet Jesus told us to be ready to give up friends, as everything else, if they got in the

way of our loyalty to the Kingdom. Is friendship, then, a second best? Are we to say that what the Greeks saw, the Christians quite rightly *could* not see? Must we sit as lightly to our human associations as to our earthly possessions? The cynic will perhaps say, 'That is what, as a matter of fact, you do. Do we not all know that the Christian (so called) tends to be censorious, superior, critical, aloof? Why is it that the good are so seldom nice?' Cynics are quite as liable as other people to exaggerate; yet they are not always wholly in the wrong.

On the other hand, there is something clearly wrong with the suggestion that Jesus would not have us make friends. The very word 'friend' is curiously rare in the New Testament. Paul never once uses it; only once or twice does Jesus speak of the disciples as His friends; but men called Him the friend of publicans and sinners: and when we speak of the ties by which He bound His disciples to Himself and to one another, if we do not call them by the name of friendship, it is because we need a warmer word still. And when we are bidden to put God first, we are not being told to measure out our love and see that men do not get too much and God too little. Doubtless the command has often been so understood; and mothers have looked at their children and husbands at their wives with the cold fear at their hearts—'Am I loving him—her—too much? and will God punish me for it?' Nor is the danger imaginary; for where love to God is incomplete, love to Him may seem to suggest one thing, and love to wife or child another. But when love is complete and true, the danger is past. The old Cavalier poet knew better:

I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

We may wonder what his lady thought when she was thus addressed; but love is not a matter of arithmetic. The deeper your love for God, the richer your love for men. Does Jesus love His servant less because He loves His Father more?

The Gifts of Friendship.

Even in our own literature it is not the most orthodox

Christians who have said the wisest things about friendship. 'It is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness. . . . Friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections from storm and tempest; but it maketh daylight in the understanding out of darkness and confusions of thoughts.' Bacon's discussion of friendship has in it something of Aristotle's consideration of the services that can be rendered to you by your friend. Emerson is the transcendentalist: 'My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me. By oldest right, by the divine affinity of virtue with itself, I find them, or rather not I but the Deity in me and in them derides and cancels the thick walls of individual character, relation, age, sex, circumstance, at which He usually connives, and now makes many one. . . . I will receive from my friends not what they have but what they are. They shall give me that which properly they cannot give, but which emanates from them. But they shall not hold me by any relations less subtile and pure. We will meet as though we met not, and part as though we parted not.'

Neither Bacon's shrewd wisdom nor Emerson's philosophical meditation on what he can expect to get from friendship, and under what conditions, seem to bring us very near to Capernaum or the Upper Room. But there is one thing which they imply, and without which we cannot understand the Upper Room itself. Friendship means sharing. The closer the friendship, the more complete the sharing. 'What I have,' the friend will say, 'is at the service of my friends: my house, my money, my books, my time. If I can use these for his interests, or if he can use them, I put them at his disposal.' 'By just exchange the one to the other giveth.' But we share more than that. We carry on our occupations together, so far as we can; and our hopes, our tastes, our ideals, we have in common, and even (as the Christian will wish to add) our experience of the grace of God.

Quantity and Quality.

But is this practicable? At any rate, in many cases friendship seems rather to be founded upon opposites. Men may differ in

their tastes, their occupations, their convictions; and the very differences only seem to form a cement to make their friendship the closer. Yet cement always needs some grounding in order to do its work. It is not difference that is the cement, but difference imposed upon an underlying harmony. A more important difficulty, however, will immediately occur. Such friendship, even if it is practicable, must be rare. The Bible seems to contemplate an attitude of friendship, of active goodwill, to mankind as a whole. A Christian is like Rudyard Kipling's Kim, 'the little friend of all the world.' But surely this is an idle dream. The advice of Polonius seems wiser :

Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar ;
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade.

We may have it in quality; we may, perhaps (in spite of Polonius) have it in quantity : we cannot have it in both.

But the teaching of Jesus (if a choice must be made) points unhesitatingly to the latter alternative. He was all for expansion. Nor did He only set the example of a universal and 'undistinguishing regard' (to borrow Charles Wesley's expression); but He expressly directed it to the least eligible, and to those with whom there appeared the least possibility of a real sharing. 'The friend of publicans and sinners'! Neither Aristotle nor Bacon nor Emerson nor even Bias could have made anything of that. It is clean contrary to all the accepted maxims and observations of friendship. And, as the judicious reader may go on to remark, it is practically neglected by every one, Christians as well as non-Christians, to-day.

The Friendship of Jesus.

If this were true, we should indeed have something to lament. But let us note, in the first place, that the emphasis on quantity may be overdone. The emphasis of Jesus was really laid, not on the number of His 'cases,' about which He appeared to think nothing, but on the way in which each need was met. And

though He might Himself be able to meet each need that was brought to Him with a divine swiftness, the Good Samaritan had to give a good deal of thought and time to his one protégé. But we must go further back than this; and perhaps help will come, where we might least expect it, from Aristotle. Aristotle said that the soul of friendship is the good; and that the good man loves the good when he loves his friend. That was as far as Aristotle could go. He could hardly have substituted, for his rather bloodless 'good,' Zeus or Apollo or any of the Olympian deities whom the Greeks were then beginning rather rapidly to see through. But the point where Aristotle had to stop is just the point where the Christian must go on. For he cannot think of the 'good' apart from God; and he cannot think of God apart from the eager and invasive and yearning love of Jesus. He is not drawn to friendship with people because he has found in them some great qualities of virtue—still less because he fancies they have discovered such things in him; but because he sees Jesus in them. He is aware, that is, of Jesus, searching their being with His wistful eyes, reading each weakness, putting His finger upon the place, and saying, 'Thou ailest here and here,' and fastening upon every valuable, though it may be latent impulse, till it grows up into beauty and strength in the healthful air of His redeeming comradeship.

The basis of all true friendship for us who call ourselves Christians is communion with Christ. And it may be that there is a sense in which men fall into friendship as they fall in love. Theoretically the Christian knows that all men are dear to Christ; and he dare not say that one man is more valuable to Him or more beloved than another. But for no human soul is this undistinguishing regard possible or desirable. A man will find his soul 'knit,' as the story of David and Jonathan has it, to the soul of another, whether that other is a superior who has everything that he has not or an inferior who has next to nothing that he has. In the truest friendship (a point that Aristotle did not appreciate) one passes beyond the balance of giving and taking.

. . High heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely calculated less or more.

‘ It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ The friendship may not be reciprocated. It can hardly be supposed that every publican and sinner to whom the friendship of Jesus went out returned it. But the friendship is still real, for the friend who seems to be giving all and receiving nothing yet lives in the assurance that his friendship will conquer the other’s neglect or suspicion ; does he not know that with him the love of Jesus has already broken every barrier down? And whether he gets any answer from his human friend or not, he has the continual answer from the love which first taught him what friendship meant, and which fulfils itself whether the human friend responds or turns away.

Friendship in the Church.

Such friendship must ever be one of the chief instruments of the growth of the Christian community. Multitudes are quite untouched by the appeal of preaching or sacraments, by arguments or proofs, or even the cries that should rouse a slumbering conscience. But they have no armour against a friendship that ‘ will not let them go.’ How many a man and woman, battered by the shocks of a hundred temptations, first learns the strength of Christ through feeling the strong hand of a friend ! How often the sight of two firm friends, and the dim conjecture of what their friendship may mean to each of them, has set some lonely and self-centred soul searching for that gift of friendship which every well-equipped community of Christian people ought to be able to supply ! The nerve of our church life is paralysed when we have come to expect our ‘ increases ’ from services and ministers, from immigrations and special times of decision or various ingenious methods, and forget that the grace of friendship, with all its infinitely various power of appeal, is the birthright of every member of the Church. ‘ We receive but what we give,’ whether we give it to one who summons it from us by the purity and nobility of his affection for us, or who calls for it by some pathetic helplessness and the very absence of

the talents which it is for us a delight to possess and to use.

Perhaps the real home of such friendship as we have been considering is the class meeting—not the place where a few perfunctory words about partially felt or understood ‘experiences’ are occasionally uttered before a rather apathetic or critical group; but a gathering of friends who share their deepest hopes and beliefs; all of whose joys are at bottom one; who can look to one another for help in every perplexity; who are sure of sympathy, outside as well as inside the ‘class-room,’ in every trouble; and who find that to talk and pray together is to be very sure of the presence of Him who first drew them each to the other. Such a group will be indeed a nurse of high thoughts and of projects that cannot fail of their divine end.

In the preceding paragraphs we have held together, as well as might be, the friendship that is mutual, and the friendship that begins, at least, by giving. The following account, by an African missionary, of his pagan friend, a Bantu chief, shows how the two may be, and actually do become, one. ‘In a land where the term *mulongo* (“friend”) is sacred, he and I were “friends.” Nobody ever spoke to me of Mungalo by name; it was always “thy friend.” I never spoke of him by name; it was always “my friend,” and everybody understood. I can hear even now his ringing tones as he announced himself outside my door by calling me Mulongwangu! (“my friend”). Heaven itself will be something less than heaven if I do not hear that greeting—(Mulongwangu) when I enter the pearly gates.’¹

¹ E. W. Smith, *The Golden Stool* (Holborn Press).

VI. CHRISTIANITY IN THE WORKSHOP AND OFFICE

DISCUSSIONS of School, Adolescence, and Friendship are, at least comparatively speaking, simple and pleasant.

A great deal has been said, and very wisely, on each of these subjects; and we have but to collect this, and find our minds informed and illuminated. But when we pass to consider the life of the young Christian in the workshop and the office, we enter a different world of thought. We tread an uncharted and unexplored path. An immense amount of attention, indeed, has been devoted to the subject of Christianity and Business, to the ethics of competition and the ideal of service. And even if the world of commerce still seems, to many sensitive souls, dominated by pagan maxims, the very experience of struggle and conflict, with its deplorable results, is leading us, we may hope, through the darkness to a light which, if still dim, begins to reveal to us, in the world of the practicable, what had been thought to be purely utopian.

From Home to Business.

But when we follow the boy and the girl, of generous impulses and elevated ideals, fresh from a school where *esprit de corps* is well understood, and a home where refinement and unselfishness are familiar, into a place of business or a factory where from the first they find no respect for what they have learnt to revere, and only contempt for what they hold sacred, the problem, if not really more acute, seems much more pressing. For six days of the week they must dwell in Meshech and in the tents of Kedar; what wonder if they are sorely tempted to think that Meshech is the real world with which they have to do, and that the

Palestine of their home or their church is but a place of dreams?

On this subject, it may be, the parson is as fitted to carry on the discussion as any one. He is quite accustomed to being told that he knows nothing about this world of everyday life, and that his exhortations are of no avail outside the pulpit and the minister's vestry. But he has at least the advantage, as well as the disadvantage, of the onlooker. He sees more sides of the game than one. And if he does not actually suffer the knocks and blows that the players welcome, or dread, he can very possibly tell each of them something that they themselves have not observed.

In the first place he knows that there are many different kinds of shops and offices. He is not tempted to think that the whole world is as bad, or as good, as the particular situations known to the youths or their parents. He has learnt, too, to look beneath the surface, and to know that people can as little be labelled simply 'good' or 'bad' as situations. Further, he has, or ought to have, a store of that sympathetic wisdom which knows how terrible a temptation may be when it is encountered for the first time, how tender (if we may trust the example and conduct of Jesus) is the judgement of God, and what stores of resistant power exist, half unsuspected, within and without the mind of the young pioneer.

The New Standards.

For the majority of young people who have been well and carefully brought up, to enter a situation for the first time is to meet a lower standard. The talk is loose and careless, or worse; the conduct is unmannerly or rude; the aims of the people he finds round him, older and younger, are low and mean. Doubtless there was selfishness at home, but it was not open and unabashed. There was perhaps more love of money than it was pleasant to think of; but money was not regarded as the one standard and aim and prize of life. Now and then there was even deceit; but it was not raised to be a rule of life, gloried in when it was successful, and only condemned when stupidity or compunction allowed it to be found out. Now he is in a world of trickery: the 'hands' know how to deceive the foreman, if

he is not very sharp; the workshop knows how far it can count on the 'boss' not discovering what is being done; the clerks learn the ingenious little devices that 'everybody' carries out, and yet by which, apparently, everybody is deceived; or the girls who serve at the counter are taught the falsehoods they are expected to tell to the customers.

Again, gambling, it may be, has been a thing that home and church alike frowned down; but the young recruit to industry is expected to take part in the shop 'sweep,' and finds things made unpleasant in a dozen ways if he refuses. Pressure, sometimes mild, sometimes positively brutal, will be brought on him, or her, to break the pledge; and no one knows much of the life of factory or shop girls who does not know of the persistence and ingenuity with which yet darker suggestions may be forced upon them.

Happily it is not every shop or office that presents all these melancholy features; but even if only some of the temptations are there, life for the young Christian becomes a serious problem. 'At least,' many an employer will cry, 'such things do not happen in my place.' 'Alas, sir,' the parson must often reply, 'are you quite sure?' Sometimes the parson, after a round of visiting, knows more than the employer sitting at his office desk. And he is aware, too, that there are many employers who do know, and do not care; sometimes, he admits with a sigh, employers who have held quite high offices in the Church.

'What Would Jesus Do?'

What wonder that Mesheeh becomes a land of divided loyalties and a double life? On Sundays the youth does his best to forget the laws that he must obey during the week, or to salve his conscience for bowing down in the house of Rimmon. Possibly he may even begin to ask himself whether Rimmon may not be after all the more powerful god of the two. 'The course he should take,' you say, 'is to ask himself, What would Jesus do?' But to ask that question is really to ask, What do I suppose that Jesus would have done, in circumstances entirely different from those of the Gospels?—a wholly different question. How can

the lad possibly tell what Jesus would have done, or how can we tell for him?

To some, indeed, the answer will seem simple. He must never do what he knows to be wrong; and therefore, if there is no other way, he must give notice, or be dismissed. But he has perhaps a mother or sisters dependent on him. Are they to starve while he finds another place?

The Lord, you reply, will provide; faith will remove mountains; the righteous will never be seen begging his bread. This is the heroic answer; and it is not difficult to make, so long as we have no concrete case to which to apply it. And no one who has sat at the feet of St. Paul will acquiesce, at all events in theory, in doing evil that good may come, even if that good is the health or the life of one's own mother. But the problem is seldom so simple or so ruthless as that. Indeed, the actual problems vary indefinitely, and there is no general rule to be laid down. Sometimes it may be necessary to venture everything, as in the extreme case where a manager says to a young and friendless girl, 'Give me what I ask, or I dismiss you to-morrow morning.' But all cases are not extreme; and to give notice and go out into the wilderness, however heroic, implies that you leave the wickedness which drove you out to go on unchecked.

It is, in fact, a confession of failure. This will perhaps seem a paradox to those who think of the religious life as consisting mainly in the avoidance of sin, or whose thoughts of Christ centre round His sinlessness. But sinlessness is at best negative. It is not emphasized in the Gospels; it is even doubtful whether the often-quoted words, 'Which of you convicteth Me of sin?' amount to a categorical assertion of His own sinlessness by Jesus. Every Christian must rejoice to reflect that when He was tempted like us, He did not, like us, fall; yet His life was far more than an act of resistance, however prolonged and dogged. The example He set was an example of active obedience and unquenchable love, manifested in the constant endeavour to rescue and redeem others. It is not the avoidance but the conquest of sin which is our aim. And the recognition of this

fact will assist the solution of many a difficult question of conduct.

Unsuspected Resources.

The circumstances that raise these questions, in shop or office, as we have already seen, are very various; but they can be reduced to two classes; when the youth is faced with 'Do this, or we will make it unpleasant for you'; and, 'Do this, or off you go.' Let us begin with the first. In certain natures a threat will always rouse a spirit of resistance; a threatener is often a bully; a bully is generally a coward. What is true of the devil is true of the bully; you resist him, and he flees. Moreover, even when the threat is not a piece of bluster, it is often a piece of bluff. To 'call the bluff' will mean a revelation to both parties in the game.

But it may be that there is real and determined malice to be encountered and real hardship to be borne. We have then to remember that in every one of us there are untapped resources, and in Christ there are unexpected reservoirs of strength. We are apt to imagine that we possess so much in the way of resistant power, and no more. We calculate the extent of our own forces; and if the enemy advancing against us comes with larger battalions, we expect to fail. But conduct is not a problem in arithmetic. Moral resistance is not a matter of foot-pounds. No one knows what he can do till he tries—if then! A sudden alarm, like the discovery of an unsuspected but angry bull in the field we are crossing, may fill us with surprise at our powers of speed. And a sudden call of duty, like the cry of a drowning man, may reveal within any of us the stuff of which heroes are made.

Still less is it possible to reduce to schedule the resources of Christ. 'All things are possible to him that believeth.' We simply do not know what we can do, or endure, when we fling ourselves with confidence on the Heavenly Power that waits to be allowed to make itself responsible for us. What we do know is that by some divine ordinance, the recognition of a duty to Him creates the power to carry it out, and the subtle advance

of temptation equips us with the wisdom and the endurance to overcome it.

'Changing the King's Word.'

But what of the second type of difficulty: 'Do this, or you will be dismissed'? The three Hebrew children could face the fiery ordeal; but they had after all only themselves to think about; as far as we know, they had no mothers or sisters dependant for a living on the lads' continued employment as pages at the royal court. Well, even here we are dealing with what is very often mere bluff. Are you so sure that you will be dismissed? The story of Shadrach and his brave young companions ends with a very significant phrase that is often overlooked. Nebuchadnezzar is made to say that they trusted in God, and *changed the king's word*. Their courage did not only deliver them; it converted the king. If, as we saw, we cannot schedule our own powers, it is equally impossible to schedule those of other people. It may be that the worst, bravely faced, will become not the worst but the best.

But if it does not? If I have to face dismissal? If I have to become a marked man, so that, turned off by one employer, I find that no one else will take me on? Here no general law can be laid down. A man in such a dilemma must find the wisest counsellor he can, and then wait for some definite guidance from above. It is not God's way to keep silence and then condemn a man for not obeying a voice he never heard. But one thing at least can be said; and that is, that for the member of a Christian Church the dilemma ought never to arise. Nor, we may add, did God ever intend that it should. For the Church is not simply a society of people who meet to worship and pray together, to recite their common convictions and make their contributions to a common fund; it is a society of people who are banded together to bear one another's troubles, to meet one another's needs, and, as Jesus expressed it in the Fourth Gospel, to wash one another's feet.

The Church's Support.

The jaded public which watched the untiring activities of the

early Christians were amazed at their enthusiasm for the least respectable individuals, run-away slaves and jail-birds; the New Testament writers lay more emphasis on the duties of Christians to one another. These duties must always come first. The early Methodist Hymn-books contained comparatively few references to what we call 'social service'; but those who braved the jeers and ill-will and open maltreatment of their neighbours to find their way to the humble class meeting and sing

Help us to help each other, Lord,
Each other's cross to bear,
Let each his kindly aid afford,
And feel his brother's care,

were not thinking of spiritual assistance only. They knew that they could rely on one another; and, however uninfluential they might be, union meant a force which was not only moral, but social and economic.

In these days the danger from persecution, open or concealed, though often serious enough, is far less than it was then; and the resources of the Church, if they were mobilized, are far greater. They are often quite sufficient to meet the hardest case that we have been imagining. Bullying or wrongful dismissal, before which the individual and inexperienced youth or girl would be helpless, would be a very different thing if the bully knew that behind his victim was the public opinion of the Church. And the victim would face persecution with a very different mind if he too knew that he had the Church behind him, actively interested and ready to step in. In the old heroic days a Perpetua and a Blandina knew that they were supported by the Church's prayers, even though the Church could do nothing else against the procurator and his lictors. But the wiser teachers of the Church have never held it to be a Christian duty to seek martyrdom. It is far better for all concerned, for the sufferers and the inflictors of martyrdom, that 'the king's word should be changed.'

It is probable that the Church to-day has more power to do this than it ever had. It would hardly be possible to find, for

example, a Methodist circuit where, if such victimization as we have been thinking of were threatened, men and women could not be found able, if necessary by acting together, to exert influence over the recalcitrant employer or, if need be, to protect or support or find other employment for the victim. No one would say that this could actually be done in every church to-morrow. If we are to be quite frank, we should have to confess that in some churches those who might be expected to take the lead would have their own reasons for hanging back. But it is much to recognize the possibility and the duty.

There are untapped resources in the Church, as in the individual. Some perhaps even to-day will suggest that this is to detract from the 'spiritual' work of the Church. Let them wait till they are themselves in urgent need of assistance. But the danger is imaginary. Let a church learn to give the broad evangelical interpretation to the command 'feed My lambs,' let its members regard themselves as forming one large family, obeying the noble rule, 'to each according to his needs, from each according to his powers,' and they will be surprised (as churches have been surprised before now) at the warmth they will find in their moribund meetings for fellowship and prayer, the inspiration in their public gatherings and services, the unlooked-for wealth flowing into their funds (for kindness begets kindness), and the new appeal in the gospel preached in their midst.

VII.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE LABOUR QUESTION

THE Labour Question,' it is often said, 'is a wages question; and therefore it can have nothing to do with religion or the churches; it is concerned with details of which the churches must be entirely ignorant, and on which they are not fitted to make any pronouncement.' That the churches as such are not fitted to draw up wages schedules is perfectly true. They are fitted, and they are bound, to claim that wages shall be adequate—that is a matter of justice, and (as many of them have maintained) that wages shall be a first charge on industry. But, when this is settled, the close and minute calculations that then become necessary must be left to others. The settlement of wages, however, is not a mere matter of calculation. It involves a 'more or less' which is a matter of temper as much as of brains. Higher wages are understood to mean less profits, and *vice versa*; and in the resulting struggle between them, what place can there be for the peace-maker? Such a struggle is the antithesis of religion. In our previous chapters we have had to ask, How can a Christian man best intervene? Here we are forced to ask whether a Christian man can intervene at all.

Wages and Interest.

But is the Labour Question simply a question of wages? It is true that the majority of disputes arise over wages; but by no means all of them. Many deal with hours or conditions, or with matters which seem to have even less direct connexion with money earned. And behind even disputes about money is the deeper clash of interests. Interests are elusive things. We rarely know what are our true interests; we rarely know what

are the desires that actually move us. We may suppose that it is more money that we want, when in reality it is more comfort or independence, or the chance of reaching a higher standard of life, or of doing what other people are doing. And what we want, we often imagine we cannot get, unless the interests of the other side (our work-people or our employers) are curtailed. This clash of interests is no new thing in the labour world. It has dominated the whole of the modern industrial period since the rise of mechanism at the end of the eighteenth century; but it is equally unmistakable in the records of the Middle Ages, as recent studies have shown conclusively; and it is quite clear in the pages of the Old Testament. Wages withheld, poverty exploited, helplessness oppressed: Palestine in the seventh century before Christ had nothing to learn from us about such things as these. The only difference, the reformer will say, is that affairs were then carried on with a higher hand and a good deal less camouflage than to-day.

The Labour Question in History.

As a matter of fact, no age has ever had a monopoly either of selfishness or of goodwill. If the Old Testament rings with the denunciations of the Prophets, it also gives us the picture of Boaz with his labourers; and the description of the good land-owner in the Book of Job, though perhaps ideal, was certainly not wholly imaginary. Even American slavery, before the days of Abolition, was not an unmixed evil. Some slaves were undoubtedly happier with their owners than were their children in their new-found freedom. But the coming of the Industrial Revolution in the latter half of the eighteenth century introduced an economic and social change which meant the appearance of a new factor in the moral life of the world. It divided the world of industry into two distinct classes. There had been rich and poor in every age; and some of the fiercest utterances of the rich against the poor are to be found in Greek poems as early as the sixth century before Christ. But when the factory system spread over this country, the interests of employer and employed were set in definite antagonism to one another. Not that this is

inevitable. We can see now, when we look at the matter with dispassionate eyes, that there ought to be no antagonism at all; and a hundred years ago the employers used to urge that if only they were as busy as they would like to be, it would be all the better for their work-people also. But in those old days (and not in those days only), whatever theorists might say, higher wages and better conditions were held to mean smaller profits. And as no employer could wish for smaller profits, he had to resort in time of trouble (and not only then) to lower wages.

The result could easily be foreseen. The employers as a whole were naturally regarded as men who were out to keep their work-people as near starving as might be; and the work-people were looked on, as naturally, as malcontents who were leagued against the reasonable profits of the men who graciously supplied them with work. Suspicion was universal; and suspicion meant fear, and fear meant hate. Fear and hate were not confined to one side. Indeed, they were shown even more definitely, in the early years of the last century, by the employing class than by the workers. It is true that the whole nation was in a panic about what was then called Jacobinism. Jacobinism, except that it came from France and not from Russia, was hardly distinguishable from what is to-day called Bolshevism; and any one who took steps to alter the condition of things in State or Church was suspected of unholy dealings with France, whether he was a trade-unionist or a Methodist. In the days of George IV and William IV the Home Office was kept constantly busy with the alleged plots of the workers; and the workers, in any attempt at combination, found themselves opposed by all the resources of the employers. Even the laws against combination, put into strenuous activity to suppress their feeble efforts at union, smiled on the thorough-going and far more easily-worked combinations of their masters. The 'agitator' is no new phenomenon: all through the last century he was looked upon as the enemy of society; in 1872 the then Bishop of Gloucester, at a meeting of an agricultural society, said that the village horse-pond was the best place for him.

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Before and After the War.

Good employers there certainly were. The great reformers, indeed, constantly complained that the religious classes were against them. But justice and goodwill were never entirely absent. Yet individual endeavours were for the most part powerless against the tide. The struggle went on. Changes of course took place. Legislation insisted on them. The status of trade unions was recognized; and new conditions were also enforced by law, first of all for children, next for women, and then for men. Finally, in certain trades, the principle of the determination of wages by an independent authority was introduced. But the long years of class hatred had done their work; and there was quite enough opportunity for the old antagonism to show itself, and to keep suspicion and fear alive. Emotions will live on, even when their causes have disappeared; and in this matter, the causes could not be said to have disappeared. Profits had increased in a far greater ratio than wages.

Just before the war broke out, feelings seemed as bitter as ever they had been; and though the war brought a truce, yet the advantages that were taken, on both sides, of the changing situations during the war, and after its close, produced a new outburst of bitterness. As a result, in some regions, as on the Clyde and in South Wales, the old-fashioned liberalism of the workers was turned into a profound dissatisfaction with the established order of things. This styled itself communism, and looked with envious eyes to Russia.

Harmony in Industry.

To most people the general strike of 1926 will illustrate the contention of the last paragraph. None the less, it is only half the truth. If strikes are an index of discontent and disunion, there is far more harmony in the world of labour than is generally suspected. A single widespread strike, reported fully in the newspapers, may give the impression that the whole labour world is seething with discontent; but in the majority of trades, agreements are in operation which work with noteworthy

harmony. Some trades have not known a strike for years. 'We cannot afford a strike in our industry,' it is said—not because there are no union funds; but because both sides know that trade exigencies demand peace, and are willing to make sacrifices for it. The science of Welfare work (the word is quite justifiable) is becoming increasingly familiar and effective; and genuine attempts to cultivate amicable relations, to the surprise of those who make them, are found to be successful.

The prospect is far from being wholly dark. On the contrary, it is just what ought to appeal to a Christian man. For if the present throws any light upon the future, it teaches us that the future is not in the grip of the 'iron laws of economics,' but is open to the very qualities of sympathy, patience, forbearance, and resolution, which surely to the genuine Christian are as the breath of life. For any kind of reconciliation, in any struggle, two things are necessary: a scheme for adjustment of interests, and the will to adjust. Of these, the first is generally thought to be the more important; most people indeed confine their energies to discussing such schemes, or lamenting their absence or impracticability; but in reality it is the second that matters. The best and most ingenious schemes, suggested by either of the disputants or by some well-meaning third party, will be useless, if the will to agree is absent. Lucifer could pick holes in a plan of pacification devised by the Archangel Gabriel. But when people are anxious not to fight, or are tired of fighting, even if positive goodwill is absent, any scheme, however imperfect, may serve their purpose. Indeed, it is lamentable to contemplate the waste of excellent intellectual work when the parties are not ready for it. A document far less wise and ingenious than the Report of the Coal Commission of 1925 would have sufficed to keep the peace, if on both sides (as the impartial onlooker must needs consider) loud cries of war had not been raised.

Christianity and the Will to Peace.

We need not therefore complain that the problems are too complicated to allow of a way out. Such ways have been found; and they will be found again as soon as we are ready for them.

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The resources of human brains and human civilization have not yet been exhausted. The practical question, which very few have ever asked is, How to secure the will to peace? And this is where the Christian Church must be the guide of society. For the preparation of the gospel of peace is surely her province, which she cannot surrender either to journalists or to politicians. Whatever may be said about Bishops who in a time of fierce struggle go on deputation to ministers of the Crown, the Church has had committed to her the gospel of reconciliation.

How, then, can this will to peace be secured? In the first place, it will *not* be secured by recrimination or fault-finding. 'Judge not that ye be not judged' is, like so many other aphorisms in the Gospels, not merely a precept of religion, but of common sense. My side may be wholly in the right, and the others may be wholly in the wrong; but I shall never get them to see this by telling them so. And we both know in our hearts that right and wrong are rarely divided so neatly. This, however, is a negative rule. What about the positive? Here we touch another precept which (although common sense, if confronted with it, might at once agree) is really religious through and through. Any man who wishes for peace must be willing to take the first step; to give some sign of his goodwill; to take the risk of a rebuff; to give hostages, so to speak, to the other side; and to have patience. 'Come now and let us reason' is the beginning of all fruitful negotiation; and if the reasoning is to lead anywhere, the man who starts it must be willing to put himself into his opponent's place. The reasoning that does not lead anywhere is the reasoning that begins with 'this is what I claim.' The reasoning that, granted patience and resolution, will always be successful is the reasoning that urges 'this is what *we* need.' Industry must become a genuine partnership, for the service of the community.

Simple, yet Far-Reaching.

This no doubt will sound to many as rather absurdly simple. 'What!' they will say, 'when we have had to spend days and months in prolonged negotiations over wage-tables and schedules,

are we to be told that a few well-meaning platitudes are all that is necessary?' Certainly not. The labour of producing the schemes that are at the basis of the cotton trade or the boot trade has been enormous; but no successful scheme would ever have been produced without the conviction that it was necessary, and that the plan of 'pull devil, pull tailor' was suicidal, and also without a definite resolve, on each side, that the other should be treated with consideration and reasonableness. To pass from claims to needs, or—to go one step farther—from rights to duties, may sound simple enough; but no one who has ever tried it, even in the calmer atmosphere of ecclesiastical discussions, will ever wish to pretend that it is easy. That each should 'esteem other better than himself,' or that men should 'in honour prefer one another,' is the first step; the first step may be a very short one, but until it is taken, there is no getting on. And this is why the New Testament lays such stress on conversion, the turning round of the will, the change of attitude. For people do not habitually think of their duties in preference to their rights, nor do they esteem the interests of others as their own. If an industrial diplomatist entered the committee-room determined that, whatever happened, the other side should not go away dissatisfied, what would be thought of him by his colleagues?

The Meaning of Reconciliation.

This, however, is the Christian position; and to train men to take it is the Church's application of her teaching to the Labour Question. To the world it may seem mere folly; but the Christian will not be surprised at being called a fool. He will at least be in good company. He knows that if this is folly, it is deduced from all that he holds most sacred. 'God commended His love to me,' he will say, 'while I was yet a sinner; I know that all men are equal in the sight of God, and that it is as important to God that they should be satisfied, as that I should be. How can I obey the law of love if I do not at least set their interest by the side of my own? and how can I hope to follow Christ if I do not deny myself, and regard my own individual desires as if they were of no

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importance?' Such an attitude, it may be said, is impossible apart from religion—from the superhuman power of Christ. But whether this is so or not—whether, that is, the true Christian is the only man who is able to be a peace-maker in the full sense of the word, or not—all will allow that without some such attitude as this, no lasting agreement or reconciliation is ever likely to take place; and, wherever such agreements have taken place, something of this spirit has been there. As a director in a large industrial concern in the North of England once said to the writer, 'When we decided to get round a table together periodically, we found ourselves in a short time growing quite good friends.'¹

To grow friendly with our opponents; that is the Christian way out. It demands faith—faith in God, and in mankind for whom the Son of God died. The method is applicable to the largest and most complex organizations. The old personal relations between masters and men may have disappeared. But every dispute involves discussion and negotiation, for the opportunity for friendliness, and for the spirit of Christ. For a youth who in these days is entering some industry and is looking forward sooner or later to some position of responsibility therein, either on the side of labour or of management, the resolve to master all the complexities of the business, to resist every impulse of temper or passion or hasty judgement, and to seat himself, as it were, *on both sides of the table*, will not fail of its reward. 'With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you; and more shall be given unto you.' We have proved one application of this word but too fully. It may be that the tides of the Spirit, still flowing through the world, will lead us in the coming generation to prove the other.

¹ See the full account of all important schemes for conciliation now in existence in the Report of Sir Arthur Balfour's Committee on Industry in Trade, published April, 1926. A good example is the Manchester Engineering Council (inaugurated in 1917) as described in the *Times*, February 11, 1927. We may yet achieve an industrial Locarno.

VIII. GAMES

WHAT is the Church to do about amusements? A perplexing question indeed! Sport, we are told on all hands, is a serious menace to our modern church life. It is elbowing out the religious activities of the Church; it is emptying our religious meetings; it is enticing our young people from all religious service. Where amusements force their way in, spiritual life is squeezed out. Everywhere we hear complaints of dwindling classes and decaying Sunday schools. The modern craze for pleasure, we are told, if unchecked, will kill our churches and destroy our membership.

The Growth of Sport.

Have we in this twentieth century fallen on particularly evil days? Is human nature more bent on distraction than ever before? Those who make this assertion must always be met with kindly but cautious hesitation. It is very doubtful whether human nature does greatly change in the course of time. Human desires remain much the same. What does change is the nature of the opportunities for doing or obtaining what one desires, and the circumstances in which those desires seek for their fulfilment.

Nowhere is this more true than in the matter of amusements. The whole position has been radically changed in the last fifty years. And this is due mainly to five new elements in our social life. First, the spread of education has meant a widely-diffused demand for variety, colour, and recreation, and a dissatisfaction with the dull and brutal sports (if they can be dignified by that name) which were good enough for our ancestors. Secondly, labour has grown, for the majority of young workers, increasingly monotonous and mechanical. Thirdly, the hours of labour are shorter, and there is more time to think about play. Fourthly,

people have more money to spend than they had, and amusements once out of the question, save for the moderately well-to-do, are now possible for the masses. Fifthly, we live, most of us, in large communities, where amusements can be organized and brought within the reach of almost every one. Whether we have to deal with a new human nature or not, we certainly have to deal with a new world.

The Value of Games.

But is this altogether a misfortune? The psychologist will tell us that the instinct for play is universal in human and even in animal life; and no one who has ever watched a kitten or a litter of puppies will doubt this. And he will tell us further that this instinct, like others, has its purpose. Play is a preparation for work; while still protected and supported by its parents, the youthful animal or human being is practising those functions and activities which will be needed by-and-by for making its own way in the world. It learns to use its senses, to control its muscles, and even to endure pain. And when we follow the development of play from the hearth-rug or the farm-yard to the school playground or the cricket field, we detect its influence on the mind as well as on the body. Once the stage of infancy is passed, the most popular games are the games that involve team-work; and team-work involves the whole of what Wordsworth called 'human nature's daily food,'

The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;

to say nothing of that stern subordination of oneself without which every team becomes a gang or a mob—in any case, the prey to defeat.

There is, indeed, much ground for the popular eulogy of 'a good sport.' Play has been defined as 'working for working's sake.' In these days of competitions, leagues, prizes, newspaper reports, professionalism, and betting, this description may seem sadly wide of the mark; play threatens to become a new and unpleasant kind of commercial activity. But it is still true of all play that deserves its name. Nature may have her ingenious

and far-sighted plans when she sets us to play; but we ourselves do not look beyond the game. It is the game itself, the fun of it, and the good hard labour and sweat, that we want. If we win, so much the better; but whether we win or lose, we have had the real thing. And when the days of play are over, and the mimic battles of the playing fields ('mimic,' indeed!) are exchanged for the sterner battles of life, is there a sounder rule than to play the game? For if we have ever really 'played the game,' we have learnt to think of our enemies as our friends; and the contest is not to win the victory over our foes, but over ourselves. We may smile at Wellington's remark about the playing-fields of Eton; but few that know Sir Henry Newbolt's noble lines in '*Vitai Lampada*,' will despise the lesson of the playing-field, co-operation and devotion to a selfless ideal, when they think of the men who have borne it

through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind—
Play up! play up! and play the game!

Healthy and Unhealthy.

But all this seems to intensify, or, as some will say, to obscure, the main difficulty. There are games and games. Even those who are most disturbed at the modern thirst for sport sometimes bowl a sober ball on the cricket field or play a quiet round of golf. They cannot want our young people to do nothing except attend prayer meetings. They will even, it may be, remember a time when they themselves thought more of playing than of praying. And perhaps they will ask themselves whether, when the Church countenanced games far less than to-day, it was very much healthier; was more work done for Foreign Missions, for Sunday schools, or for the various kinds of Christian endeavour which are carried on mainly by young people of both sexes. On the other hand, if we admit that young people's work is better in quantity and quality, are we to neglect the problem or imagine that it does not exist?

There are, we said, games *and* games. There is a world of difference between cricket and pitch-and-toss, chess and poker,

hockey and billiards, clumps and kiss-in-the-ring. The difference is quite independent of what some may consider the moral influence of the games; and there is almost as much difference in watching games—tennis or a big league match, or (if we can extend the meaning of the term a little) a horse-race or a prize-fight. And when we pass from games, whether played or watched, to other amusements, the cinema, the dance-hall, the theatre, we find it even harder to generalize. Some, indeed, would roughly condemn certain games as wrong; but that is generally because it is felt that those games involve gambling or even cheating, or offer dangerous and almost irresistible temptations to wrongdoing. This was doubtless true of cards, as of the theatre, once; it is certainly not true of them to-day. There are, indeed, temptations to be faced in most games; but they are not all irresistible. The same game may be perfectly innocent as played by one set of people and in one set of surroundings, while in other circumstances it may be both dangerous and degrading.

But if few games are to be condemned as wrong in themselves, there is a real difference between games; it may be expressed by saying that some are much healthier than others. All games are expected to give pleasure, or they would not be played. And the source of the pleasure is either the exercise involved in the game, or the thrill. Most games involve more or less of both. Indeed, a game without a thrill would be a poor thing. ‘The perfect feel of a fourer’ at cricket, the delight of a straight shot between the posts after a long run down the football field, or a brilliant piece of putting at the eighteenth hole—no one who has experienced any one of these would despise it. But no true sportsman would allow the thought of any of them to obscure his delight in the skill, the tenacity, the swift and sure combination of eye and muscle, the subordination and the disciplined interplay with every other member of the team, which gives the game, whether it ends in defeat or victory, its true glory. The larger the element of exercise, the healthier the game, the more it makes for the soundness of body and of mind. But when the pleasure

is mainly dependent on the thrill, excitement without corresponding activity, it is better left alone; it wakes up a craving which all wise men will keep asleep.

The Christian View of Games.

But this brings us to what we may call the Christian view of games; at all events, to the Christian's view of his games. It is either a one-sided or an imperfect view of games which would make two lists, the permissible and the forbidden, or which would say 'Is it wrong? If so, why? And if not, surely I may play it as much as I like.' The real question is not 'Is it wrong?' but 'Is it right?' 'Does it make me a better man, more able to do my work, more fully equipped to serve God?' If you cannot honestly say that it does this, it is wrong; you have no time for it; you would be better employed doing something else. For the man whom we have in mind will keep to what (in Wesley's phrase) is for the glory of God. Now, anything that makes a man better equipped, in mind or body, to 'do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with his God,' is to God's glory; and if a game does this (as many a game certainly does), a man may well rejoice in it. And even if he thinks of it, as of everything else he does, as a means to an end, he will still throw himself into all the honest, healthy pleasure it affords; he will give it its chance, so to speak, of doing what it was meant to do for him and his friends.

Of course, he will remember the wise old saying, 'All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any'; and because a game is good, he will not suppose that it is good at every conceivable time. It is only *one* means to his end; he will keep it in its place; but because he does this, he will enjoy it the more. Why should not a man begin a round of golf, or a game of cards, as he begins his work, or a service in the House of God, with the noble words, 'In the name of God'? Indeed, if he cannot, he may be pretty sure that there is something wrong.

The Responsibility of the Church.

So much for the individual. But we began with the thought

of the Church. What is to be the attitude of the Church to games? Well, we are perhaps nearer to the answer than we were. In the first place, the Church cannot rule out all games as unspiritual or worldly. And in the second, if games can make men and women better equipped, as we have put it, to serve God, the Church must take thought for this equipment. Some people might say, 'If people can get their games, and the advantage that comes from them, well and good; if not, we are sorry, but we cannot help it.' Surely, an unworthy attitude. If games are good, means to the great end of life, the Church must do her part to make those means available for those who can use them. More than this, if we ourselves, as individual members of the Church, know anything of the spirit of our religion, we know that it means sharing; we shall be no happier than Job was if we 'eat our morsel alone'; and we shall find it difficult to enjoy our game (and quite rightly) unless we are doing what we can to make it possible for others to get as good enjoyment out of theirs. As the report of the Copec commission on Leisure wisely put it, 'The Church in her corporate capacity must press for the provision of open spaces and athletic facilities by all the civic authorities; and she will do all she can to see that her children enjoy life in all its fullness. . . . The lack of healthy exercise has undoubtedly a very serious effect on morals quite apart from the loss of pleasure which might be experienced.' Open spaces, yes; and the power to put them to the best use. What an opportunity (seized already, happily, in thousands of Scout Patrols and Boys' Brigades) for the athlete or sportsman to teach the youngsters attached to his church (all of them potential hero-worshippers, God bless them!) to enjoy the game as he enjoys it.

The Copec Report just quoted goes a good deal farther than this. It is considering the use of leisure, and the provision, not only of games, but of amusements in general. And if the Church goes as far as this in games, it cannot stop there. What is true of games is true of amusements, such as hobbies, reading, gardening, music and art, country holidays, and cinemas, and

even dancing. Once take seriously the rule of sharing, of 'fellowship,' and what you value for yourselves, the joyous and elevating use of leisure, you must manage to provide for others.

Means and Ends.

'But this,' you say, 'will break up the Church's work and destroy its life. You will reduce it to a mere social and recreative committee. Wherever this has been tried, it has proved fatal.'

To this argument there are three answers. First, a large number of Churches have set themselves to provide for the healthy use of leisure, with results the reverse of harmful. No one who has ever known a successful troop of Scouts or a vigorous Wesley Guild would dream of denying this. Where harm has resulted, it is not the game in itself, but the kind of game; the game that depends for its attraction on the thrill rather than the exercise is always liable to do harm, whether it is organized by the Church or in any other way.

But there is a second answer, without which the first would often be imperfect. If the Church provides the means—in this case, healthy recreation—it will also preach the end. It will remember that it exists for the presentation of the noblest ideal, the highest life; that it is set for the conversion of men and women, boys and girls, to that life; that its business is to bring people to Christ. Now, the Church will not do this, either by providing games or by refusing to provide them. People cannot be brought to Christ simply because there are no rival attractions; nor can they be kept away because there are. Christ does not wait to enter the heart till it is swept and garnished, and bare of every human and natural interest. Indeed, the friendship with a good man or woman that is first formed through games may be the most powerful lodestone to the Saviour. At the same time the Church will remember that games are not the only means—far from it. But these other means, and more particularly the 'means of grace,' as our fathers called them, must be made powerful and attractive in

their own right. How many a Wesley Guild member has said, 'I enjoy the Devotional as much as the Social, and more!'

The Churches and the Community.

And thirdly; some churches can perhaps provide, out of their own resources, all the opportunities for recreation that may be needed or advisable. For others, this will be impossible. Most churches, especially in these days, can manage a cricket field or a tennis-court or two; but what of those recreations which could not conveniently or lawfully find a home on church premises? Are they to be neglected? It may be that they are in greater need of supervision than the rest. Supervised, influenced, controlled, they may become a means to the higher and sounder life of the community; left with only the supervision (admirable as far as it goes) of the magistrates and the police, they are on the razor-edge of peril and degeneration. The churches will have to learn the lesson of combination. Why should not a group of churches form a recreative club, and see that the dancing, the billiards, and the theatricals, which they would not allow on their own premises, but which they tolerate and even defend in the young people of their 'best families,' are above reproach—

control them and subdue, transmute, bereave
of their bad influence, and their good receive?

Or, if this is thought impossible, at least they can combine to organize public opinion, to 'establish a standard drama and cinema in buildings provided for the purpose' (we quote the Copec Report once more), to turn our modern facilities for healthy exercise to the best use, and to reduce the temptations to gambling and drink—the great foes of all true sport.

'A perplexing question.' It is. These few paragraphs have probably raised far more objections than they have answered. And they have laid down no rules, and attempted to settle no casuistical points. Two things, however, they claim; that the Church must look squarely at life and not hide its head in the sand; and that what it cheerfully allows to some, it must be prepared to provide for others. At present it is not giving too

much attention to amusements, but too little. We discountenance the wrong when we countenance the right. We unify life when we test every part of it by its value for the service of God. We consecrate our talents, our occupations, and our 'dear joys,' when we make them available for the enjoyment and the growth of those whom our Master called His brethren.

IX.

THE CHURCH AND PUBLIC LIFE

A WISE observer once remarked, 'The man who made Justices of the Peace made the history of England,' or something to that effect. The country has never been governed or administered by professional politicians. The men who have borne its various responsibilities have been men who have had their own professions and businesses, their own livings to make, and their own interests and tastes to cultivate. And whatever mistakes they have made, the tradition of unselfish public service has never died out. High-minded men have been called for in every department of our public life; and, whatever may be said about them in the heat of conflict, they have not been wanting.

A Mistaken Rivalry.

Nevertheless the Churches have never seen their abler men (and in these days, we must add, women) go into public life without some measure of regret. 'What a pity that they should not have used their gifts for more directly spiritual work.' 'How much more usefully they might have spent their time in church activities.' Doubtless, they say, we must render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; but we must first render to God the things that are God's. And, people have even been known to ask, Could we imagine Jesus, whose example we must all follow, taking part in a contested election?

The first plea would be more convincing if we could be sure what things are Caesar's, and what things are God's. The man who decides on a secular career, instead of (let us say) the ministry itself, may believe that he is giving God what belongs to Him. And, for the second, there are a great many callings in which we cannot easily picture Jesus, which yet have to be carried on. It would be futile to limit the Christian man's choice

of occupation or interest by an exercise of such imagination as this. Far more important is the consideration that the aim of all high-minded and generous public life is an aim with which the Church must always have the warmest sympathy. The Church, indeed, exhorts and trains men to love God and to love their fellow men; that is, putting the matter on its lowest terms, to seek the true interests of God and man. Now, it is surely the will of God that the life of the community should be ordered according to the great principles of justice and truth and mutual goodwill and forbearance; nor can the true life of man be attained on any other terms. It may be that the Church ought to be prepared to say to some of its adherents, 'Your duty is to go into public life, and serve the present age there.' Whether it does this or not, it cannot rightly complain if its adherents take this decision themselves, and apply the law of their religion where its application is so sorely needed.

The Temptations of Public Life.

In these days, however, the main obstacle lies elsewhere. We no longer speak of public service, whole-time or part-time, as 'profane' or 'worldly.' For one man who disappoints his Church by preferring corporation committees to prayer meetings, there are a dozen who disappoint it by preferring quiet evenings at home, or motoring, or bridge parties, or gatherings whose value to the life of the community is, to say the least, not conspicuous. They are too tired, they say, when the harassing day's work is done; they must be amused; they have no energy left for further work, either inside the Church or outside.

Other reasons, too, and somewhat weightier, are often given. Public life, it is urged, is still often sadly corrupt. The men who are in it are there to serve their own ends. We may not yet have reached the level of politics where a man might be heard to say, 'I make no pretensions, but I have not yet sunk so low as to be a Congressman'; nor of our own country in Walpole's time, when every man was believed to 'have his price.' But politics, many will urge, is a 'dirty business'; ingenious methods of bribery and corruption are practised behind the

scenes; the politician, municipal or national, has to live with low-minded men and sordid motives, in an atmosphere of intrigue and compromise and degrading give-and-take. Principles have to be constantly accommodated to party needs; and though, as most people will claim, our standards may be higher than those of any other country, no one can take part in the rough jostling of party conflicts, which infects all our public life, without finding the delicate outlines of his own convictions rubbed away, and his own conscience smirched.

Divided Loyalties.

Another obstacle, to a thoughtful mind, may seem even more formidable. Our whole political life in this country is founded on the principle of representation. A man must represent his constituents. He is expected to do so. And in doing this he will often be expected to pocket his principles. If he does not, he may be told, with more or less explicitness, that his representatives have no further use for him. In any case, he must be prepared, in his constituents' interest, to consort with men who are distasteful to him, and take an interest in things which, otherwise, he would never look at. He may not, indeed, have to face the special problems of the statesman. The statesman has the interests of the whole country to represent. And how easily these may clash with what he feels to be the interests of some other country, or of humanity as a whole! Is he to call on his country for that unselfishness which he would willingly exhibit in private; or is he to carry out a policy of 'realism' which, for himself, he would abhor? But even if the politician has not reached high office, he may be compelled, like Burke in his *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol*, to remind his constituents that he is their representative and not their delegate, and he may be treated, in consequence, as the electors of Bristol did not dare to treat Burke. Moreover, all his labours may win nothing but ingratitude. His conscientiousness, his devotion to public duty, may be taken for granted or left unnoticed; the least slip, an accident which could not have been foreseen, or a mere popular whim and fashion of the moment,

may mean defeat and oblivion. It is not every one who can 'go down into the dark' with colours flying and a heart unembittered.

The Difficulties Far From Insuperable.

Now, to say all this is only to say that high-minded devotion to the public service calls for courage and endurance; that, in fact, it might almost make a man take Plato's jest seriously, and say that he would only undertake it at a price. As a matter of fact, what Plato said was that a man might well ask to be paid for the trouble of taking office; we believe in salaries for office, and even for Parliament; were the Greeks more public-spirited than we? But courage and endurance are not unknown in the Church; we would gladly think that they are not rare. We are often reminded that the calls which are successful are the calls which make the greater demands. Ask for some trifling gift, and you may be refused. Ask for a piece of regal generosity, and from many a man you will get it. If the Church were to approach men of position and talents, and ask them, as part of the 'sacrifice of their souls and bodies' to God, their 'reasonable service,' to enter public life, might not the request find a surprising response?

These qualities may be rare, even in the ranks of the Church; but, thank God, they are not unknown. There is hardly a municipality without its group, however small, of Christian men, who have come to their duties in the name of their Master. Nor, if these men were asked, would they admit that their difficulties were particularly formidable; perhaps not more formidable than the difficulties which they would have had to meet, or were actually meeting, in their own private business concerns. A Christian man who enters public life does indeed challenge the fierce criticism of certain sections of the Press, and run the risk of misrepresentation and obloquy; but most readers of these pages can name members of their Church who have been proud to face all this, and have conferred signal benefits alike on their community, and on the Church itself, whether it has sympathized with their anxieties or deplored their vocation.

But whether the Church deplores it or not, public life has to

be carried on. The real question is, whether it is to be carried on under the influence of men of deep Christian conviction and purpose, or by men with no such protection against self-seeking and partisanship. Every obstacle that the Christian may feel is really an argument for his undertaking the unwelcome yet surely appropriate task. If there are dangers, who should be able to face them as bravely as the Christian? If the life is one of continual temptation, has he not a shield which can quench all the fiery darts of the evil one? The heroic ages of our religion seem to have passed away. A morning congregation in one of our wealthier Churches does not suggest the sweat and strain of the battlefield. Our hymns still use the language of the campaign; prosperous middle-age still asks God to equip it for the war, and teach its hands to fight. It may be that the answer to the prayer is nearer than the singers imagine; and that if the fight were envisaged and approached, religion might shed the unreality of which at present so many complain, and the Church, at last learning to take itself seriously, might be taken seriously by the world.

The Church's Growing Concern with Public Questions.

But the matter can be looked at from another angle. There was a time when it was comparatively easy to regard the Church as but little concerned with the government of the community. Those were the days when men took a narrow view of the Church, and an equally narrow view of politics. They were the days when the affairs of a great city like Birmingham—great even in the middle of the last century—could be settled by a little knot of party politicians gathered round a table in a pothouse. Municipal affairs are not so settled to-day; and although in a Council House, as in the House of Commons, members sit according to their party, much of the business that is done has no relation to party at all. In a full-dress debate, to be reported in the newspapers, a man may feel that he must speak as a member of his party, whatever it may be; but in the work of committees where the genuine work is done, he knows that he must get down to business, and use his own brains for the good of mankind.

And when he gets into committee, he finds that a great deal of the work he is doing interests him as a Christian man even more than it can interest him as a councillor. The supervision of the streets, the watchful eye that has to be kept on betting and prostitution, the renewal or reduction of licences, the ceaseless conflict with all the manifold causes of disease, the provision of open spaces, the strenuous endeavour for more and better houses; and even the supply of sinks and wash-houses and the placing of street-lamps in dark lanes and entries—there was a time when councillors never troubled their heads about these subjects; and when the Church never suspected that they had anything to do with the saving of souls. To-day they form a large part of municipal activities. The wealthy church of which the councillor is a member, with its generous subscriptions to Home and Foreign Missions and its wide philanthropies and pleasant and opulent social life, may fancy that there is nothing particularly ‘spiritual’ in any one of them. But in the struggling mission-hall in the slums, or the down-town parish church, all this is understood well enough. For there something is known of the dreadful power of temptation. When men and women are at grips, saving poor souls out of the fire, what wonder if they will curse the open doors of the public-house, or the dark alley where each night lust lies in wait for innocence, or the crowded bedroom where decency would be a problem to an archangel, or the backyard whose miserable washing arrangements break the heart of the housewife in her weary struggle against dirt, and demoralize a whole family?

And if the wealthy church knows nothing of all this, and politely regrets, at its decorous church meetings, that the worthy Mr. X. does not take a larger place in her important councils, it is not because the church is too spiritual to do anything else, but because it is not spiritual enough. It does not know the elementary facts about the fight in which it professes to be engaged. ‘The soul of all improvement,’ we are often told, ‘is the improvement of the soul.’ That is one of those statements which we can tolerate on some lips, but which are tasteless on the

lips of others. We can believe it and glory in it when we hear it from the noble and rare soul who, rescued in the midst of such conditions as we have barely hinted at, but unable or unwilling to leave them, holds fast the confession of his faith where everything is in alliance to wrench it from him. We cannot tolerate it when it is uttered by someone whom chance or wealth has removed far from the knowledge of such temptations, and whom selfishness has kept from the attempt to lift them from before the feet of others.

The State, like the Church, belongs to God.

The Church has thus a direct and a growing interest in what concerns the State. The Church is bound to take sides—it has already taken sides—in what is done in public life. And if what the Church wants is to be done, the Church must see that it is done. It must inspire and commission men and women to do it. To purify and permeate public life is as much the work of God as to save the individual soul. Each, indeed, is impossible, on any except a dishearteningly small scale, without the other. For the State is itself an organ for the performance of the will of God. It is the proper sphere of justice and mercy, of all the great demands of God as formulated for all time by the Hebrew prophets. It is the home and seat of fellowship, of the widest possible sharing of all the general and common values of Church life, as the Church is the seat of the special and conscious fellowship in the deeper and rarer gifts of God. This truth was understood more clearly in the Middle Ages than by later generations. Dante in the *De Monarchia* stated it in language which will never grow out of date. The proper function of the human race which God has created is to bring into operation the whole capacity of the human intellect; this can only be done through universal peace; and for this, justice must be supreme in the world. The world, therefore, must be under a supreme government (Dante could only call this an ‘Emperor’) which has the purest will and the greatest power to practise justice on earth.

But let this be forgotten or scouted as unpractical, and we are

left with another view of the State, worked out for an all too credulous world by another Italian, Machiavelli. If the State is not the organ of the will of God, human rulers will be free to make it serve their own ends as best they can; and if they can do this by chicanery, intrigue, and violence, who is to blame them? And Thomas Hobbes, a 'new Machiavelli' in our own country, drew the portrait of an absolute monarch (was he thinking of his own contemporary, Charles I?) to whom what men then called the divine right of kings and what we now call Bolshevism were indistinguishable.

No one will suppose that all our politicians are conscious followers either of Dante or of Machiavelli. But if we are to have any theory of the State at all, we must make our choice between the two. And if the Church has any belief in the Kingdom of God such as Jesus proclaimed at the opening of His ministry, a society whose King is known as the Father of all men, and whose members are therefore as brothers of one another, sharing the same interests and reverencing the same heavenly law of justice and love, it must train and organize its adherents to leaven the life of the society that is thus to be transformed. The examples of Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, and Gladstone will remind every one of an interior and religious devotion that burned more brightly because of its unwearied outward expression; and when our own virtues, no longer fugitive and cloistered, find their heavenly way into the highways and hedges, it may be that the 'spiritual' activities of the Church, now so often honoured with deferential carelessness, will be re-discovered as absolute necessities for all who would repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

X.

RACIAL PROBLEMS

OUR study of the industrial question raised difficulties which, to many, grow more complex the more they are considered. The task of bringing two sides together has often seemed hopeless. But it has again and again been accomplished. And there is at least one reason which makes the accomplishment far less formidable than is sometimes supposed. Both sides, at any rate in this country, belong to the same nationality, have the same traditions, speak the same language, read the same literature, and, in the worlds of amusement, science, and religion, may share the same interests. Bitter as their misunderstandings may be, there are certain things in which they do understand one another. All know the meaning of the words fairness, justice, goodwill, and sportsmanship; the dividing lines of which men are conscious are crossed by a dozen bridges; when some great question of athletic prowess leaps up before us, Hobbs and Sutcliffe belong to us all; and if Belgium is threatened, party war-cries are forgotten. Although it is common to lament the weakness of the appeal of religion, the demands of religion are to-day, as for generations past, revered by men and women of all parties; and though sects may divide us with barriers of their own, a certain conception of religion, as it has been held by Englishmen for centuries, underlies our whole national life.

Nations and Races.

But when we pass outside our own island bounds, all is different. At once we have to deal with the problem of race. Every Englishman who has put the matter to the test knows that there is a difference between discussing a matter with

another Englishman and with a Frenchman, an Italian, a German, or even an American. There is, indeed, an Anglo-Saxon and a European, as well as an English point of view. But the interests that most deeply move us to-day stretch over all five continents. The statesman, the banker, the merchant, the manufacturer, the labour leader, cannot be satisfied with taking into account the feeling of Berlin, or New York, or Paris, or even Moscow; they have to think of Yokohama, of Valparaiso, of the swarming towns on the Yangtse, and the countless villages on the Niger and the Congo. That is the new factor in the life of the last fifty or even the last twenty years. And if other nations, with their narrower interests, may contemplate this with equanimity, members of the British Empire share their citizenship with every race and colour under heaven.

The clash of race and colour, thus emerging in every part of our Empire, transforms the whole of our social and industrial outlook. Men are doubtless born free and equal, and Britons at least, we say, shall never be slaves; but does that mean that a Kaffir is to be free to marry an Englishwoman, or even to ride in the same car with her brother? Ought the English civil servant or officer to invite his Indian colleague to his club, and ought the Indian to invite the Englishman to visit his wife and daughters in his home? We may know how to deal with an 'agitator' if he comes from Sheffield or Dublin; we may even think him a very good fellow at bottom; but how if he comes from Petrograd or Nanking? We can deal with a blackleg if he belongs to our own town, or even if he is brought in as 'imported labour'; but what if he is a Chinese coolie or a 'nigger' from the back veldt? There is no link between us, no common bond; we cannot sympathize, and we do not understand.

Do Racial Antagonisms Exist?

Many would go farther. Race, they say, means a positive and ineradicable antagonism. White, black, yellow, and red must always be enemies. They point to the deplorable colour question in the Southern States of America, and the existence of a colour bar wherever two colours live in large numbers side by side.

They can draw striking illustrations from Kenya, from General Hertzog's labour legislation proposals in South Africa to-day, from the fear of yellow immigration which is as dominant in Australia as on the Pacific Coast, from the menace of Islam, and from the mysterious but resolute insurgence of natives races which now makes itself felt in every quarter of the globe. The din of this clash of colour, strident in the newer journalism of every continent, drowns the voice of judge, administrator, and missionary alike.

In view of all this, the statesman may silently prepare for eventualities; and the trader of the meaner sort may cheerfully reflect that every war has meant a greater demand for guns and beer. But the Christian only sees something that must be ended. For the New Testament will have nothing of a racial conflict. The world into which Christianity was born was aware of well-nigh abysmal cleavages, between Jew and Greek, Roman or Hellenic and barbarian. And in Rome (more truly the centre of the world then than London is now the centre of England or Paris of France) there was a mixture of East and West as perplexing as in New York or Chicago to-day. But to the new religion, there was neither Jew nor Greek, neither black nor white, and slavery itself (into which even then race entered very largely) was lifted to the level of freedom. Faith in Christ had come to play havoc with all the old distinctions. The equality of all men before the justice of God or His redeeming love in Christ, dimly understood while still the new religion lingered in Palestine, was seen at once when it crossed over to Macedonia, or before that to Cyprus. All were to stand before the judgement seat of Christ, and the most despised of men were His brethren.

If the Jewish Christians were slow to discover this truth, however, Christians in later ages were equally unwilling to remember it. There have been great missionary periods in the history of Christianity; and there have been long stretches when the Church as a whole has repudiated missionary responsibilities. But the principle touches wider issues than those of Foreign Missions. The Church at home might either support or neglect

missions, and feel, all the while it was doing either, that black and yellow could never be the same as white, and that the convert, however interesting on a missionary platform, could never claim equality of opportunity with a 'hundred per cent' white man. But as soon as God is realized to be the Father of all men, colour must go; and the clash of colour becomes the clash between Christianity and the world.

Colour and Colours.

This phrase, however, the 'clash of colour,' needs further examination. We have spoken of red and black and the rest as if we had only these simple colours to deal with. But alike in America and India, if white is on one side, there are many different shades on the other; ranging, in both countries, from almost coal-black to nearly white. The different shades may collect on one side of the line, with white on the other; or they may draw different lines of their own. The Indian word for caste means simply 'colour'; and a common hatred or fear of white has done nothing to lower the barriers of caste. Nor do different colours always clash; Macaulay has a famous sentence about the quarrels of Europeans which could set red men fighting each other in Canada and black men fighting each other in India. His sentence might have been even more impressive, and more lurid, if he had dreamt of the possibilities of 1914.

'Natural' Antipathies.

If, however, we are to consider the possibilities of the natural enmities of colour, what of other alleged natural enmities? Europeans may be all perfectly white, but we have long been used to hearing of such 'natural' enmities in Europe, though they have varied continually through the centuries. Nordic faces Alpine, Greek scowls at Slav. The precept of Bias, to which we referred some time back, has been abundantly illustrated in European history; we have changed our enemies as often as we have changed our allies; and during the Great War we did not fight a single nation whom we had not at one period or other regarded as a firm and 'natural' friend. Nor were those changes capricious. Our alliances or hostilities have been 'natural'

because of geographical position or circumstances of trade or territory. Holland has been at one time as 'naturally' a neutral or a friend as it has been, at another, a foe. Karl Marx may be accused of having ridden his view of the economic factor in history to death; but, at least in the last three centuries, there have been no European conflicts which have not been predominantly for trade routes or trade supremacy.

The truth is that if 'natural' means innate, there are no 'natural' antipathies, either of race (taking that ambiguous word in its broadest significance) or of colour. We do not hate yellow and black because they are yellow or black, but because, for some more or less definite and assignable reason, yellow and black, in some part of the world, have got into our way, or we in theirs. Hatred to any particular person or group is not an instinct; it is a reaction to a supposed thief or rival. And when we are dealing with a thief or a rival, we may forget about colour or race altogether, or we may use the idea of colour or race to intensify our dislike. We are really not dealing at all with the clash of colour, but with the clash of interest. The enmities of Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans, and Russians, have been from time to time as intense as if all Frenchmen were red, all Germans black, and all Russians yellow. We do not dread and antagonize Bolsheviks because they are Russians, but Russians because they are Bolsheviks. How warmly we thought of those 'steam-rolling' legions of Russia in the early stages of the war!

On the other hand, goodwill, like happiness, will 'keep on breaking in.' We have all heard Englishmen who have lived in China speak with genuine appreciation of the loyalty and kindness, the good humour and courtesy of the Chinese coolie; and Lafcadio Hearn is not the only European who has fallen in love with the Japanese. The missionary knows well how the love of Christ and the loyalty to the new religion may actually drive differences of race and colour into oblivion. If enmity is a fact, friendship is a fact too. If the one is discounted by community of interest, so is the other. Dividing lines there are,

and always have been; but they are drawn differently in every age.

The 'Economic' Factor.

History is a matter of the relations between groups, larger and smaller. Once a group is clearly envisaged as a rival, fear and suspicion and hatred all come into being. In fact, each is the inevitable companion of the rest. And when hatred is at work, any one of the existing differences between the groups may become so much fuel for the flame. Consider, for example, the hatred between Dutch and Kaffirs in South Africa, between Spartans and Helots in ancient Greece, between Jews and Samaritans in Palestine after the exile, or between English and Irish until the other day. The Dutch wanted the lands of the Kaffirs, and the Kaffirs were determined that they should not have them. The Spartans wanted to keep all the political power in their own hands; the Jews and the Samaritans were thorns in each others' sides; and the English began, and were forced to go on, by treating the Irish as if they were part of an estate, to be run for the exclusive profit of England. The matter is equally clear if we think of the Jews in Europe, either in England in the sixteenth century or in Russia and Austria in the nineteenth, or of Greeks and Armenians in the Levant to-day. The hatred which persecuted them was neither irrational nor instinctive. It was the hatred felt for a money-lender who has to be cajoled, who cannot be outwitted, who has no political power with which to defend himself, but whose interests can never be the same as those of the community with whom he sojourns.

Whether Karl Marx is right or wrong, we are driven back in every one of these instances to the 'economic' factor. One group has what the other group wants or is believed to want. Once that is established, the miserable corollaries follow. Every difference in cult or custom or language or dress or personal appearance is seized upon. Sometimes these details are unpleasant or even repulsive in themselves. We do not need to go to the effects of the bodily presence of low-caste Indians or negroes or Europeans to understand this. Mere unlikeness will

regularly intensify dislike. But it is not in itself the cause of dislike; and when there are other reasons that make for mutual alliance or helpfulness, unlikeness is forgotten.

Wars of Religion.

But what, some will ask, of religious animosities? These certainly exist, and have had the most tragic results. But religion is not race; and it is curious fact that when religion has been more or less conterminous with race, it has seldom bred hate. The wars of religion in Europe were not racial; and though Hindus and Moslems may be of different races, there is no Hindu race or Moslem race. Still, it will be argued, religious wars were not based on economic considerations. That is open to discussion. What is not open to discussion is that in religion, as elsewhere, hate is caused by the apprehension of some danger to what we value as a possession, material or immaterial; our social stability, our convictions, our religious community, our self-respect. The Protestant did not hate the Catholic for believing in the Mass, but for penalizing him for disbelieving in it. The Hindu does not hate the Moslem for not coming to worship in his temples; but for making insulting noises outside them. Consider how differently Catholics are looked on by Protestants in Ulster and in Middlesex. Remove the threat to what we value, and you go far to remove our hate and fear. But when the threat remains, all the memories of the real or attempted or imagined wrongs of the past combine to spur us on with thoughts of insult or revenge, of contempt or of iniquity. Swift was as shrewd as he was satirical when he described the feuds of the 'big-endians' and the 'little-endians' in Lilliput.

Love and Fear.

Now, when we apply all this consideration to the problems of to-day, in whatever continent, it does not solve them, but at least it points to an advance. To say, 'we must love all men, of every race,' is useless, because it is ambiguous. What does such 'love' mean? If it means, to force yourself to feel as warmly for an Indian or a Chinese as for one of your own race, that may be impossible, though many have found that it needed little forcing.

If it means, in the words of a recent writer on the relations between China and Britain, 'to make friendship and loyalty and the recognition of the rights of others to free expression of personality of more value than life and security and prosperity,'¹ we are at least conscious of an intelligible task. But it really means at once less and more than that. It means to pave the way for goodwill, to set oneself to make rough places plain, and to remove obstacles and stumbling-blocks—what the Bible calls 'offences.' And this can be done, even if it does not achieve its object all at once. To express the matter in the simplest terms, it means not thinking about 'what *I* am afraid of' but of 'what *he* is afraid of.' Hate springs from fear; and that fear is nearly always mutual. The American in the Southern States fears the negro; but the negro fears the white man. Why? Let the white man start out to discover this. It may not be easy; but he has never yet made the attempt. Why are we English feared, at the moment, by almost every race with which we are in contact? That fear is not universal; witness the difference in the relations between white and coloured in Nigeria and in Kenya; in the West Indies and in Carolina. Virulent hatred disappears when the causes of fear and suspicion have been reduced to a minimum. All this, it may be said, is very far from love in its eager, enthusiastic Christian sense. Perhaps; but it does mean respect. And without respect, there will be no love. Respect will do what self-interest will never do; it will lead us to remove the chief points of friction; but when that is done, real goodwill finds its chance to follow.

It is not our task to show how this can be done in the individual problems to which we have referred. The problems are discussed in scores of recent books. And if the solution is seldom found stated in any clearness, the tragic effects of leaving these causes of friction alone, without seriously considering them, is evident everywhere. Further, even if we could suggest detailed applications, we should have done little for the average citizen at home. Applications are for the men and women on the spot.

¹ R. O. Hall. *China and Britain*, (S.C.M.).

But the driving force for those applications must be supplied by the Christian community in this country. Christians have surely learnt from their own faith that peace is only found when we consider others before ourselves, and bear the burdens of those who are weaker than ourselves. We are the racial problem; and we may well thank God that British statesmen have in these days formulated the doctrine that where natives are immediately concerned, their interests must be paramount in our policy. We may be even more thankful that the League of Nations is now a recognized institution in the life of Europe and the world. To consider its possibilities and claims will be our next task. When we are true to its fundamental aims, race will take its position, not as the seed-plot of animosities, but as a mine of wealth for the development of mankind.

XI.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

OUR study of national and racial hatred has led us to one very definite conclusion—namely, that neither nations nor races are hurled against one another by some innate and unalterable opposition. Neither hatred nor friendship exists by any natural or inevitable necessity. Human groups, larger and smaller, like human individuals, clash when their interests clash, or where they are thought to clash—by no means the same thing, except in the result. To-day, and, theoretically in every age, we pray for peace, at least ‘in our time.’ But peace is not a matter of natural affinities, any more than hate is a matter of natural antipathies. It results, in the actual politics and dealings of the world, from the absence of fear and suspicion; and there is much in the New Testament to suggest that this may be true even of the peace of religion. In other words, when the causes of mistrust are removed, the way is opened for goodwill.

Human Nature and the League.

‘How matter-of-fact!’ one will say, and ‘How idealistic!’ another. The statement is both idealistic and matter-of-fact. The removal of the causes of mistrust may be a very humdrum proceeding, involving long and patient discussions round a table, the collection of columns of statistics, and the drawing up of pages upon pages of schedules. Every one who has worked at a wages-agreement in a complicated industry knows this. But it cannot be accomplished without idealism or (to use perhaps a better word) faith. No one would undergo such a labour, liable as it is to constant set-backs, disappointments, and misunderstandings, were it not for the rooted belief that patience can have its perfect work and that men who imagine themselves to be inveterate foes can be turned into friends; or

without the vision of a state in which complaints will be considered as soon as they arise, and men will regard the appeal to force, in public and private quarrels alike, as a crime.

This conviction is at the base of the League of Nations movement. The League of Nations has carried out the organization of commissions and the mobilization of discussion to a point never reached in the most intricate trade; and it has held up before the world the conception of a society of nations in which swords are beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning-hooks. Hence the suspicions with which it has been and still is regarded. 'You will never change human nature,' say some; 'the first man to be born killed his brother; and the tiger snarls in us all.' 'The vision is magnificent,' reply others; 'but your new committees are only your old diplomacy writ large.' Rightly considered, the two objections neutralize one another. No one claims that human nature is going to be changed—as if any one really knew what human nature is! But the League does claim that it is introducing a new factor into human conduct. And the new committees are saved from reproducing the old diplomacy because of the vision which inspires them. The old diplomacy had in view the interests of single nations; and the best diplomatist was therefore the wily intriguer who could most cleverly deceive his rivals; the new commissions aim at the common interests of all the nations concerned.

Arbitration and its Difficulties.

The procedure may be complicated; but the principle is simple—as simple as it is novel, for it is certainly novel. History is full of the records of pacts and agreements; but these are pacts within groups, to protect their interests against other groups, in the last resort by the appeal to superior strength. And the historian knows all about arbitration. Arbitration is really as old as history, or at least as old as war. For every war ends in a peace of some sort, whether 'stable,' 'imposed,' or 'patched up.' Every 'peace,' that is to say, is a kind of arbitration; that is, an agreement as to terms, even though the terms are only acquiesced in because of sheer inability to go on fighting.

But what is commonly meant by arbitration is not any and every kind of agreement as to terms, however reluctant, but an agreement that is made *before* fighting; and this in national politics is a new thing. It is hardly more than a century old. Between 1820 and 1840 eight disputes were settled by courts of international arbitration; between 1880 and 1900 *ninety*. We may legitimately pride ourselves on the fact that in this experiment (for such it is) Great Britain has led the way, the United States following. Unfortunately arbitration has never fired the imaginations of the writers or the readers of history; narratives of wars are much more exciting and effective. Consequently most people have no conception of the enormous number of disputes actually decided in this peaceful fashion. They still believe that somehow arbitration is 'against human nature.'

But reliance on arbitration has three very serious obstacles to face: the high feeling that may rise over some question to be decided, when the newspapers will tell us that 'the country is clamouring for war'; the possession of a strong army and navy—as Homer put it, 'an iron weapon of itself draws a man on to fight'; and the existence of 'sanctions,' to enforce the award at the sword's point. 'If war must come sooner or later,' we say, 'why trouble about this useless business of arbitration?' To meet the first difficulty, the imposing device of the Hague Court was invented. The Hague Court was a permanent organ for the decision of international quarrels, to which disputes might be, automatically as it was hoped, referred as soon as they arose, and before warlike passions had time to blaze up. It was like the substitution of permanent courts of justice for trial by ordeal of battle. But it was experimental, and it was diffident. No one could tell beforehand what the proper constitution of such a court should be; and its authors did not dare to hope that all disputes would be brought before it. So, to save their face, as the Chinese would say, they ruled that questions of 'national honour' (whatever that is) should be outside its jurisdiction. To meet the second difficulty, no one was ever bold

enough to propose that armaments should come to an end; but might there not be some limitation? This might seem attractive when two nations tried to make some mutual agreement; but what of the dozen other nations waiting to take advantage of the two quixotic contractors? The third difficulty, that of sanctions, was the greatest of all; for all the great jurists had proclaimed in effect that international arbitration, and international law itself, could recognize none of the sanctions enforced by a State on its members; and that nothing could be allowed to interfere with the sovereign rights of an independent state—which meant, in the last resort, that no one could interfere (except, of course, by war) with any State's doing what it intended to do.

The Discovery Made During the War.

Then came the Great War, when every old quarrel of the past five centuries and more, whether 'settled' or not, flung itself into the arena of conflict, and the cry of 'arbitrate' was counted for sheer treachery; when we thanked God for every chance to to make our armaments bigger and more 'bloated'; when, though we talked of a 'just peace,' we meant to impose it, and were told that we should have to impose it, by the sanctions of a decisive conquest. And then at the point when these three difficulties seemed more formidable than ever, when all Europe rang with the clash of steel and the roar of bombs, there emerged a scheme which took account of all three, and which challenged us by a plan for peace resting on foundations hardly dreamt of by the most unpractical politician and the most daring philosopher.

This idea can be stated in almost absurdly simple terms. 'Make the complaints of each nation the concern of all.' As a matter of fact, that is precisely what each nation has done for its own citizens. Order is not kept by the judge and the policeman, the prison and the gallows. It is kept because the whole nation interests itself in every dispute, provides the machinery for its settlement, and sees that the machinery works. That is what the League sets itself to do for the nations who form

its membership. It has its Assembly, in which all the member nations are represented equally; its Council, consisting of so many permanent members—i.e. states represented by their delegates—and so many members elected by the Assembly; and the Permanent Court of International Justice, which is now established at the Hague, and which is composed of a panel of legal authorities recognized and respected throughout the world. By means of these a dispute can be dealt with immediately it arises, and the weight of the decision is such that no nation in its senses could well quarrel with it or refuse to accept it. To reject the award of an individual arbitrator may be an act of patriotism, though in this country we have happily known better; to reject the verdict of such a court as now exists is to fly in the face of the opinion of the world.

What the League Has Done.

The League has been in existence for eight years—eight years in comparison with (shall we say?) the five thousand years of human history. It was born in the midst of the most fearful upheaval the world has ever known, when the passions and the fears of every nation were at fever-heat; and it was at once assigned just the tasks which diplomacy had found itself unable to solve. The very men who had to shape it and to work it were necessarily men who had grown up in the bad traditions of the previous age, accustomed to think of the appeal to war as lying behind all negotiation, and of the voice of the guns as being the last voice in all discussion. We could not have been justly surprised if its infant efforts had all been failures. On the contrary, its achievements have been remarkable. All its solutions, however delicate the interests involved or the points raised, have been accepted. We cannot, indeed, deny that they have sometimes been imperfect. But the decision of the dispute over the Aaland Islands in 1920, over Upper Silesia and Albania in 1921, and over the Corfu and Mosul questions in 1923, show how the authority of the League has been accepted in each case by the parties concerned and by the world, when there was nothing except the League between the rival claims and war.

The settlement or prevention of international disputes, however, is only one part of the activity of the League. Directly it came into being, the discovery was made that it could be turned into an engine for dealing with world-wide evils that no nation by itself, nor even a group of nations, could hope to grapple with. Permanent Committees were appointed to deal with the white slave traffic, the drug trade, and other matters of public health and well-being. The International Labour Organization was formed, which exists to supervise the conditions and remuneration of labour in all parts of the world. It cannot, indeed, impose restrictions on any nation; but it can make suggestions with the weight of its international investigations behind it, which the individual nations may well think it worth while to accept. Not only does it act as a clearing-house for the most considered as well as the most daring ideals for labour (the two are often really the same); by upholding a high yet not impracticable standard for the world, it inevitably raises the standard of each nation. Of course enthusiasm and haste will complain that its demands have not yet been translated into law by the countries which are represented on it. The abolition of the slave trade was a long while in coming; but it would never have come if the demand had not been made; and once the demand had been made, with the strong conviction of justice and reasonableness behind it, acceptance (as experience shows is always the case) was bound in time to follow.

Mandates and Labour Conditions.

‘The complaints, but also the duties and functions of each, the concern of all.’ Nothing illustrates this extension of the principle better than the doctrine of Mandates. Until the Great War each nation desired its ‘place in the sun,’ and each meant to secure it by its colonies and protectorates, run avowedly for its own profit. Now the stronger people accepts from the League a ‘mandate’ for its tutelage of a weaker one. Interference by the League with the way in which these ‘mandates’ are carried out has been and doubtless will be strongly resented; but the general sentiment is on the side of responsibility, and the nation which

objects to it in its own affairs believes in it for the world as a whole. 'You cannot legislate in advance of public opinion'; no, yet you can lay down a law which no nation would obey if it had not been formulated, but which none will care to disobey when the judgement of the world is behind it.

Still more striking, as an illustration of the new possibilities introduced into international life by the existence of the League, is the Economic Conference which met in May, 1927, at Geneva. Through the previous year (to use the words of Sir Arthur Salter) 'a committee of thirty-five persons, drawn from twenty-one nationalities, and including industrialists, merchants, officials, bankers, economists, agriculturists, and representatives of workers' and consumers' organizations, had been engaged in the work of preparation.' The result is a survey of the world position, which would have been impossible without a body like the League to bring it about, but which, once made and worked out by similar authorities, will do what no single government or even group of governments could hope to do. The League is coming to be felt to be able to do for individual nations what they cannot do by themselves; it is also creating a conception of universal well-being, which no one nation could have developed apart from the rest. Sir Arthur Balfour, Sir Norman Hill, Sir Max Muspratt, Mr. Walter Layton, and Mr. Arthur Pugh were sent by the British Government—a combination in itself sufficiently remarkable. And yet 'the Economic Conference must be regarded, not as an isolated event, but as a stage in the continuous work of international collaboration in the economic sphere which had been begun before the project of a general conference was launched and will continue when the Conference is over.'¹

The League, the Church, and Christianity.

International collaboration. Here we have the expression of the spirit of the League. This is the secret of its vitality. Born at a period when brute force seemed at last triumphant, and, like the infant Hercules in his cradle, attacked by the serpents

¹ *Round Table*, March 1927.

of widespread contempt and hostility, it has steadily gained in prestige and influence; and while many have seen in it (not unnaturally) the only safeguard against another war before which civilization itself would reel in confusion, reformers and idealists (as perhaps we should once have called them with a touch of pity) have found in it an unexampled means of procuring for the world what no nation could have procured for itself. A new attitude of mind has been produced. An alternative to war has been provided; a new conception of the common good is growing up, and a method of mobilizing the forces of the world for the service of humanity. A statesman can now serve his country by serving the world through the League. Germany made her entry into the League amidst universal congratulations on September 10, 1926; and America, though she refuses to contemplate membership, and often seems to wistful eyes on this side of the water to be forgetting her own ideals, has been co-operating with the League in a fashion that has been practical rather than spectacular.¹

With such a record, it might be claimed that the League has done in eight years what the Church has not done in twenty centuries. But such a claim would not be fair; nor are the League and the Church rivals. The hope and the ideal of the Church is 'peace on earth, among men of goodwill' For this the Church looks to God. But God bestows His gifts on us at the price of labour. We receive, and yet we earn and we accomplish. And what we accomplish is not the less for that reason the work and gift of God. For centuries men have toiled with the ideal before them, through the chaos of the barbarian irruption, the brutality of the Dark Ages, the disappointment that watched the Renaissance sink into luxury and sensuality

¹ The recent American proposal for the prohibition of 'war as an instrument of national policy' might be thought of as leaving the more cautious procedure of the Covenant of the League of Nations far behind. But, whatever be its ultimate destiny, it could hardly have come into being apart from the Covenant (itself the offspring of American idealism), and it can only hope for success from the co-operation of nations who have already learnt to think and work together as members of the League.

and the Reformation into religious sectarianism and political hate, and all the national and imperialistic rivalries of the modern age of trade and industry. The ideal was vain, as it seemed; for the *organon*, the machinery, was lacking. Now it has been given to us. At Geneva the best thought and hope and knowledge of the nations can gather and think and speak, as never in the history of the world before. This is God's challenge to mankind. Long ago men learnt that God demanded justice and mercy—kindliness and brotherly fellow-feeling and goodwill. 'Nor time nor place did cohere' till now; 'now, they have made themselves'; or, as we may surely be allowed to say, God has made them. And if Christianity is inextricably bound up with the attitude of men who in honour prefer one another and esteem others better than themselves, that is, of men who place the interests of others and of the community before their own, then surely the League of Nations, which in its essence exists for this very object, provides an example, on the largest and most imposing scale, of 'Christianity in Action.'¹

¹ Readers who wish to learn something more of the League may consult *Christianity and the League of Nations*, by A. W. Harrison (Epworth Press, 1928, 2/6 and 3/6). The first step towards forwarding the action of the League is to join the League of Nations Union, whose central offices are at 15, Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1.

XII.

NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH

THE principle of the League of Nations, which we considered last, is the principle of all sound institutions. As all our previous chapters have reminded us, human beings live in human societies and groups. These groups and societies have formed themselves to pursue the most various objects, political and economic, social and religious; but they all aim at some form of common good; they confer, or are intended to confer, some satisfaction that is to be shared by all their members. But this aim can never be reached without goodwill. Institutions cannot create goodwill; but they can, so to speak, give it its chance. All sound institutions are channels for goodwill. They cannot hope to be anything more.

Utopias.

Some will find this rather a meagre account of what institutions might be. From the earliest days when people began to study society seriously, the mind has been apt to take refuge from the disappointing present in some form of Utopia. Plato set the fashion. But few lovers of English literature would fear to set beside his *Republic* the alluring picture drawn by Sir Thomas More. In our own days the followers of Karl Marx have succeeded in doing what neither Plato nor More ever dreamt of, and have put their amazing Utopia into action. The actual schemes have been as far removed from one another as the East is from the West; but the framers of the schemes have had this in common: they have all believed, or professed to believe, that if once the schemes could be started, all would be well; fraud and wrong would have an ending, and man, born free, and loosed from his chains, would have but to live and be happy.

But this is a profound mistake. We need not, indeed, spend

time in urging that a Utopia is a Utopia, and therefore can never be expected to find a place in earth. 'We will put that right,' say the Bolsheviks. 'Behold our Utopia beautifully functioning already in Russia; and when the world-revolution comes, all the oppressed peoples of the earth will rejoice in its glories.' It is more to the point to ask whether any student of Utopias would ever be happy in any one of them. No one certainly seems to be very happy in Russia to-day, not even the members of the Central Communist Council. We may suspect that a Greek communist mother, even if she had the physique and the tastes of an Athene, would not be deaf to a shrill little voice when her first-born son was carried off to the communal nursery; and I for one am inclined to believe that Ralph Hythloday would be as relieved, when he reached home, as Lemuel Gulliver.

The Reason of their Ineffectiveness.

But this is not all. The worst of the belief in Utopias is that it cannot be squared with psychology or with human nature. 'Let us get the right institutions,' say their inventors, 'and the right temper will follow.' The reverse is correct. 'Let us get the right temper and the right institutions will follow.' Properly speaking, there is no such thing as a right institution. All institutions have worked well, and badly, in their time. But if the temper is right, most institutions will work without too much grinding or squeaking; and if they do squeak, there is always someone to go for the oil-can.

The important question is, does history give us any grounds for thinking that this goodwill is ever likely to be secured? History is a sorry tale. If John Wesley thought that the study of mathematics would turn him into an atheist if he did not resist its blandishments—no very difficult task for an Oxford classic!—what awful fate must we not fear for the historian, who knows all about the Assyrian tyrants, the chaos of the Dark Ages, the Thirty Years' War, and the unspeakable misery of half Europe, or even of Armenia alone, after the Peace of Versailles? Yet somehow humanity keeps on. The story of mankind reads like the story of a storm-tossed ship, wave after

wave beating against her straining sides, and at every ninth wave the terrific prospect of being engulfed; yet the very billows that threaten the ship only lift her on their crests. The crash has not come yet. 'Hora novissima, tempora pessima sunt'; 'tis the last and fiercest hour'; but even in that depth of despair the singer could cry 'Vigilemus,' 'let us watch!' And if he thought that he was watching for the final clap of thunder or the last huge surge that would land the amazed mariners safe on Canaan's shore, he found that what was really on its way was smoother water and a brighter sky.

The records of the past may terrify us when we search them for something more than wise saws, edification, or patriotic gratification. But their very terror brings its own antidote. Is the human race ever likely to have to face a severer strain than it has had to face again and again in the past? It is as if the spirit of history had heard the command laid on Jeremiah, 'to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.' The ancient civilizations of Mexico and Central Asia, the empires of the Moguls and the Manchus, the solemn majesty and marvellous technical skill of Egypt, the grace and power of Crete, are 'one with Nineveh and Tyre.' Greece, Rome have gone; the eternal city could not withstand the Huns, nor Constantinople the Turks. The spirit of history, busied over its lamentable work, remembered but too well the first part of Jeremiah's task; did it not forget the second?

'Hora Novissima.'

Doubtless it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed; but society survives. And in the darkest hours hope has refused to be silenced. As is well known, hope has been wont to express itself in prophecy, and in that form of prophecy which it is usual now to call by the name of Apocalyptic. Apocalyptic as we find it in the Bible, in Daniel, for example, or in the Book of Joel, is the voice of despairing hope when the last hour is imminent. Things are at their worst. Now, therefore, the Lord will break in. The foul tyrannies of the earth, like the aged and effete skies themselves, shall be crumpled up; the Messiah shall

slay the wicked with the breath of His mouth; and a new world will rise, fair and smiling, out of the smoking ruins of the old. Some such prophecy, though shorn of its wilder characteristics, is found on the lips of our Lord in the Gospels. It was certainly not unknown to St. Paul. In his earlier period, at least, St. Paul's vision was bounded by the Parousia, the heavenly appearance of the Lord across the flaming ramparts of the world.

But, as every careful reader of the New Testament is aware, this is not the whole or the only prospect. Jesus may speak of the Kingdom as if it were suddenly to appear, when men thought least about it; but in the Sermon on the Mount He can lay down rules for His followers to carry out in society, as if society were going to last for ever. He can speak (if we may follow our records) as if He were to come in the clouds of heaven, or to sit on the throne of His glory, while what He is really interested in all the time is the feeding of the hungry, the clothing of the naked, and the forgiving of enemies up to 'seventy times seven.' 'Lord, when shall these things be?' That was not a matter that He cared to consider. What drew His thought was what could be done, and needed to be done, here and now. And it is significant that St. Paul, who at first could hardly think of the present save in terms of the future, and to whom the Saviour was the Lord who was to come, ends every one of his more important letters with a series of moral exhortations which could have no applicability to the new age, but which call for obedience as loudly in the twentieth century as in the first. These paragraphs are not, as some have assumed, mere ethical appendices, as if he wished to say, 'Now that we have settled these really important matters, let us add a few practical reminders before we close.' On the contrary, he is calling attention to what in his own days would be the hardest and the most necessary tasks for the Christian; to what in our days is most radically opposed to our so-called 'human nature'; and to what flows directly from the doctrine of love as both he and his great fellow-apostle St. John described it.

There is a profound association between these two aspects of New Testament teaching, the catastrophic and the continuous. And it is an association which is deeply rooted in our experience. Catastrophes have constantly been expected. Is there a single age which some have not believed to be the last? Those who lived through the searching days that followed August 1914 remember how easily apocalyptic language rose to our lips. But life goes on. It is not only over the brooding East that calamities sweep and leave all as before. We must eat, work, sleep, marry and give in marriage; we must co-operate, specialize, learn the need and the practice of patience, fidelity, courage; we discover in a hundred ways that the Lord requires of us honesty, kindness, humility. And in our own society, as in every other, there are infinite gradations of goodness and badness, selfishness and self-sacrifice, cowardice and heroism; while vice and virtue lie so near together that sometimes their very name and repute are interchanged. It is all as old as the days of Noah; and though the flood may have come and swept every one away, it did not sweep away society. 'Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.'

'Morrison's Pills.'

But how slowly climbs the dawn! Impatience and enthusiasm are all, naturally, for hurrying matters on. As they are, we ask, do things remain? Is the earth still groaning under forms of ancient evil and social wrong? Love will put all right. Obedience to Jesus and the gospel will solve all our problems. Get the people to go to church, and there will be no strikes. If only Christians would devote their energies to the conversion of the outsiders, no one would need to deplore the existence of a housing question. Sometimes the panacea is expressed differently. If we could only get rid of private property and abolish capitalism! Nationalize industry! Or, from the other side, Down with Socialism; Socialism is of the devil. Away with Bolshevism from the earth, and all who sympathize with it in lands where people ought to know better. Let us only restore the institution of marriage to its ancient honour. Prohibit strong

drink—or even prohibit the policy of prohibition! These ‘Morrison’s pills,’ as Carlyle named them, are legion. It is easy to see why they are cried with such pathetic vehemence and confidence. It is equally easy to see that one may be no better, by itself, and no worse, than another; and that in every case the suggested cure is as far out of our reach as the wished-for effect.

The real cure is not so simple, because it is in reality far simpler. The secret of happiness, as of liberty, is eternal vigilance. God’s gifts are our achievements. He gives us no presents wrapped up, so to speak, in brown-paper parcels. But when we are ready to pay the price, to yield the co-operation, there is nothing that we cannot have. ‘Ask, and ye *shall* have; seek, and ye *shall* find.’ This is not simply a promise; it is a law. Those who take the trouble to ask and to seek, as if they were serious about it, and meant to carry out the conditions, are rewarded.

The City Built to Music.

In other words, the city of our dreams can be built; and when it is built, it will be worth living in. But it is like Tennyson’s far-off city in the ‘Idylls of the King.’ It is built to music, and therefore it is always building, and never built. But it is not built of bricks and mortar, any more than the Kingdom of Heaven is a matter of food or drink. If it is built to music—the music which perhaps the morning stars sang in the dawn of creation—it is built in the hearts of men. For the city, as the Greek thinker put it, is made of men, and not of stone or marble or mud. And men, as we have seen at every stage of our inquiry, are creatures of society; they have to live together, if they are to live at all. That is, they must pursue the common good; they must cherish mutual respect; they must learn to share. We actually do learn, though unconsciously; we must come to act upon the principle, and aim at it consciously.

Where the city of the faithfullest friends stands,
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,

Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,
 Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,
 There the great city stands.

Now, the beauty of it is that this city can be built at once. We can start to accomplish it here and now; and it is being accomplished. A Utopia, like a large fortune, is a relative term. Bacon's New Atlantis itself would seem but a poor place to some sprightly people who shop in Tottenham Court Road; and to an inhabitant of one of Coulton's mediaeval villages, Letchworth would be a Utopia almost beyond an angel's dream. Jerusalem can be built in England's green and pleasant land; but the mental strife which is the condition and price of that building, and the good hard play of the sword that never sleeps, is pre-eminently the *métier* of the Christian. He knows what sharing and fellowship mean; he knows that a human soul is of more value than great possessions, and that what a man may call his own may be demanded of him any night when he goes to bed. He has learnt to feel uncomfortable and distressed if he has two coats or two beds when his neighbour has none; and he understands the art of preferring another's interest to his own, and of seeing that someone else can get the better of the bargain.

Who can Build thus, but the Christian?

Nor is this a matter merely of experience, or of a peculiar or eccentric philosophy of life. The Christian knows what is the source of these convictions of his. He sees how they are rooted in the divine will, and manifested in Christ; and since he knows that Christ came to show us, as he will often say, what God was like, he knows that the whole law of the world is based on such sharing, such self-forgetfulness, as this. It is to him what the conservation of energy and the indestructibility of matter were to the physicists of a generation ago. But unlike the physicists, he knows that his laws are not liable to modification or change.

Perhaps at this point the reader may be inclined to smile. Is this true of the Christian, he will ask, or have we here a gentle

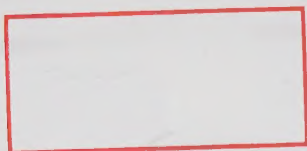
and very flattering caricature? Not a caricature, certainly, unless every portrait of a Christian in the New Testament is a caricature. And not a caricature, even if we think of actual Christians as we may know them to-day. True, they have always been rare, among the vast numbers of mediocre and careless men and women who have imagined that they could lay claim to that noble and ruthlessly exacting title. But they have been the salt of the earth, and whenever the building has risen from the ground, they have been the mortar of its walls. Unhappily, in no age have they been numerous enough to reveal the secret of the full power of their knowledge and their skill. When every one else has been daubing the walls, as Ezekiel put it, with untempered mortar, they could not by themselves add stability to the tottering structure.

But let us imagine a community of men and women who really did believe in God—that is, who really were convinced that what Christ said and did revealed the power behind the universe and at the heart of reality and life; let us suppose that they acted upon this faith, not, as at present they are almost forced to do, in isolation, but as one coherent society, each member of that society acting and reacting on the rest, each counting on the other, and being counted on by him; and let us suppose that they proceed to put these laws of life into practice (as they could do, if they could thus count on one another, at once) in the different relations of life which we have been considering in the previous chapters, home, school, workshop, office; and then, as they might have opportunity, in the wider fields of municipal life, parliament, industry, and even international affairs. Even if we say nothing of the heavenly power and effectiveness which the Acts of the Apostles associate with all such common action (calling it the activity of the Spirit of God), we can see the enormous efficiency of such an instrument. And this for two reasons. First, that genuine and unselfish comradeship would give men what they have always been seeking, and have never found, and would attract and influence them as no more limited society could hope to do. Secondly, the conviction that, where

the will of God is concerned, there is nothing exclusively spiritual or exclusively material, would give to both the spiritual and material sides of life a vigour and vividness and influence which, when they are isolated, they can never reach.

The road from the actual to the ideal starts at our feet. It is the 'new way' of the New Testament; and we cannot miss it, because it is marked by the prints of the feet that were pierced on the cross for our salvation.

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